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ファンタジア文庫

Konjiki no WordMaster

Arc 5 - Matar Deus' Secret Maneuvering

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Chapter 208 - Current State of Passion

The point of view changes by about two stories.

The day before when Hiyo and the others were indulging themselves in the feast, when the [Beast King] Leowald returned to the [Beast Kingdom · Pasion] from [Valar Wilderness], everyone was speechless at the scene spread before their eyes.

Before they have gone to the duel, the country was covered with natural spectacle of greenery, but now, that green was destroyed, burned till it's carbonized.

Not only that, clearly you can discover traces hit by a sharp blade. As if a fire extinguishing event was over, soot and black smoke are dancing everywhere.

But what everyone being surprised the most, was the state of the Tree of Origin·Aragorn which was the symbol of Pasion.

The great tree possesses a fascinating green throughout the year, never withering, and with its enormous presence, it gives of a graceful feeling that wraps the heart of everybody.

But right now, the great tree which is supposed to be overflowing with vitality isn't reflected before their eyes, but one whose life was totally cut down, and won't live for another tens of years if left alone.

The young and vibrant thick leaves that has flourished could not be found, and the strong and thick branches, they seemed so brittle that they may break with little effort.

Everyone who had witnessed thought the same thing. And that is.....

The tree is already dead.

All who had witnessed thought and want to deny it at the same time. however, this is without a doubt the reality, and to have done this.....

".....Kokuro....."

Leowald muttered unconsciously. That mutter was mad with anger, with thirst for blood to the maximum.

“.....You. deal with the medical treatment and rescue the wounded. Get it?”

As Leowald gave the soldiers who came back together with him orders, they began to move from their places.

“I will go to the Great Tree. As I have heard from the people, Kokurou seems to have infiltrated the Great Tree. I’m anxious about Blansa and the others”

And thus, Leowald faced towards Aragorn and went in a quick pace.

Muir and Arnold on the other hand, went opposite to rescue the citizens.

“.....so cruel”

Muir who sees the injured and collapsed citizens all over the place gave a frown. Some among them are little children, and because the houses were made from the hollow of a large tree, some of them were crushed beneath when it was cut down.

There are some who lost his home by being wrapped in flames, and some are suffering from severe burns being caught by the fire.

“How could they do such a thing.....?”

They thought that a person creating such tragedy is inscrutable.

“The one who would be able to do this is a madman”

Anger filled Arnold’s face. Grinding his teeth, he moved his eyes towards those who need their help.

Screaming and groaning is heard from here and there. A mother calling for her child, and conversely, another child seeking for her mother’s voice. Pitiful cries flit around the whole place.

“Unforgivable.....”

“uncle.....”

“And what’s more! According to the rumors, this was done by a beastman! One of our very own kin!”

The bonds of the [Gabranth] are strong. For the beastmen who value these bonds above all, one could never betray a person who was recognized as a friend once.

"Yet this person..... Has he never found a friend in this country at all?"

He only could think of it that way.

".....I don't get it. No matter what happened, there is absolutely no reason to do these things"

".....that's right"

".....Good grief, and to think that our long awaited alliance that we had attained in great efforts to be settled with this!"

After the many years of continuous fighting, an alliance was eventually formed between the [Evila] and the [Gabranth]. By the fact that it was formed, there is no mistake that they are near in achieving peace, even if it's just a single step.

However, this time is an act of betrayal, by one of their comrades, of their very own kin. The joy that they have got in the forming of their alliance was totally ruined.

"A-anyway, uncle, we need to save them!"

"Ah, Y-yeah!"

The two swept away the anger in their chest, and gave priority of saving lives with great efforts as possible.

As soon as Leowald enters the Great Tree, he hurried to Blansa, his wife, at once. After reaching the place, he saw her currently nursing the injured older sister of Arnold in her arms.

"Mother!"

Mimir and Kuclear embraced their mother altogether. She felt relieved after seeing that her two daughters are safe.

"Blansa....."

"dear....."

Leowald and Blansa stared at each other, then made a small nod. Then he was informed by Blansa everything that happened in the country.

"Is that so..... so it was that guy after all.....does Kokuro still bear a grudge towards me?"

Leni who was the second prince has picked up the matter.

"Father, who on Edea is that Kokuro bastard?"

But to that natural question, Leowald and Blansa gave back only a stern expression. It looked like they seem to be wondering how they should explain this matter.

Everyone was able to understand that that there is something serious going on between them and Kokuro.

".....Dear, I think the children have the right to know"

"But, Blansa....."

"Thank you for worrying, dear, but it's alright "

"Uh, yeah....."

Still, having difficulties to decide whether he should tell them or keep it silent, he stood still at the same spot. Everyone was watching him, waiting for his mouth to open.

And finally, Leowald started opening his uneasy mouth slowly.

"Kokuro is.....the predecessor of the right hand man of the previous generation's Beast King Lendock, Gareos Konigh. And he is....."

Leowald paused for a moment, then,

".....my own, and Blansa's little brother-in-law"

"Little.....brother?"

Where did that mutter come from? He do not know. But those words are the questions that everyone here wanted to ask.

But, when he look at the state of Blansa, who was keeping silent as giving her consent, now they know that it wasn't a lie, but the truth in itself.

However, there isn't anyone who dared to ask.

"Kokurou, is an orphan whom Gareos had picked up in the battlefield"

Leowald explained plainly to everybody.

A story before Leo was crowned as the Beast King. The times when Lendock, his father, still ruled the country. The times where chaos still leads the whole world, when the everyday life of fighting hasn't still died out and continued to torment people. And the time when a large scale war broke out between them and the [Humas].

As for what was done in the boundary between the beastmen and the humans, the beastmen were able to barely gain victory, but the damage dealt to them was serious, too. Many towns and villages are sacrificed, and many lives have lost.

A small village of [Egma], being engulfed in the war, was driven to its destruction. Gareos Konigh, who was leading the Three Beast Warriors that time, grieved about the village that they were unable to save.

But fortunately, he heard an Intel that a couple of a certain family was still alive. As they went to confirm it in a hurry, there was an older sister and younger brother being protected by their father and mother from the attacking [Humas]. The kids were still young, around five or six years old apparently. They had pure white hair like the snow.

But the moment when they rushed, the parents were already killed by the humans, and had started bearing their fangs towards the siblings. That's why Gareos somehow managed to protect them from the detestable blades of the enemy.

"The older sister and her little brother were the only ones left in the village."

The elder sister's name is Nerei. And the younger brother's name.....was Kokurou.

"War orphans.....aren't they?"

A word with similar meaning flowed from the first prince Regulus's mouth. Leowald gave a slight nod, then continued the story.

"Gareos decided to adopt these two who didn't have any relatives left but themselves"

Coming from the debt of not being able to save their parents, this is the utmost of what he could do. Fortunately it can be done because he was not in the situation where increasing his attendants by two could endanger his life.

And also, he also has a seven year old daughter, all alone. In fact she is.....

"my wife here.....Blansa"

Everyone's eyes faced Blansa. It is connected to what Leowald was saying a while ago. Then he becoming his brother-in-law is not strange.

With the adopted son's story coming out unexpectedly, of course they were confused at Kokuro and Nerei at first. However, over time, they eventually became accustomed to it.

One time, accompanying the three people the young Gareos went to Lendock who was the king at that time to pay respects. Then, Leowald met Kokuro for the first time.

"When we met at first, Kokuro seemed to be a weak child at a first glance. I was already past ten at that time, and because I have been training harder than anyone else, Kokuro looked even smaller to me. However, his eyes hid a keen strength. Though it is weak, I could feel that they were the eyes of a challenger"

To Leowald's words, Blansa partly closed her eyes in nostalgia.

"Nerei was also young and beautiful at that time"

"Yes, it is so"

Still with closed eyes, Blansa agrees.

"She was a very talented child. Bright, polite, and a child with a strong heart above all"

Blansa tells as she recalled, Leowald furthermore added.

"It was to the extent that you will be speechless in admiration"

Everyone recognized and acknowledged her as the brain of [Pasion], as she could infer the things a common man couldn't understand.

After that, the four came over often to play with each other. Especially for the meagre Kokurou, he trained himself with Leowald with sword and fist as well.

Blansa and Nerei happily watched them. Though the world was at war, peace continued between the four people.

Ten years have passed, and the four people matured in both their mind and body. Especially Kokurou, who had changed completely, and compared from the first time, he now has a strong figure, and reached the place that isn't far from Leowald in terms of swordplay.

Kokurou who was able to participate in the war, had reached the point where he was called the [White Blade] with awe by his allies and with fear by his enemies.

Nerei and Blansa opposed participating in the war, but they declared that they will be defending the country.

Kokurou, in order to repay the country for saving him and Nerei took up the sword and with Leowald, they went towards the battlefield.

“But on a certain day.....that incident happened”

Chapter 209 - Kokorou's Revolt

An epidemic suddenly spread in the [Beast Kingdom·Passion]. With the cause unknown, Yuhito and Rarashik desperately tried to elucidate it, but can't provide effective means against it.

At first, it spread to the citizens rapidly like poison. While many people were suffering, as for the cure, Lendock even tried make some runs in the nearby towns and villages to investigate, but everything was for naught.

It seemed to spread through only in [Pasion] for some reason. It was an illness called Dehydration Syndrome, and once you are infected, in each passing day the disease will gradually decrease the fluids in your body.

Even continuous taking of water can only delay the progress, and like deadly poison without treatment, it rapidly corrupted the whole country.

Many people died, but finally, Yuhito succeeded in the development of the cure. It's made from a boiled rare medicinal herb. The amount was not enough, but it can be administered through those people who are suffering from the disease somehow, so he managed to stop its advance.

But as the medicine was about to go out of stock, the Dehydration Syndrome have infected Blansa and Nerei at the same time.

Yuhito was ordered to hand over the remaining medicine immediately, but.....there was just enough for a single person. Of course, Lendock organized his troops and in his command tried to search for the herb, but unfortunately, the invasion of [Humas] had begun.

If he lessens the troops here, they may lose the fight. But Lendock's thoughts of saving the two are very strong. What's more, the two people both had the intentions of being Leowald's wife.

That time, Gareos volunteered. Even if he draws out, he declared that this war is not much of a hindrance for them, and decided to go for a trip to search for the medicinal herb.

Thus, on the day Gareos was about to start his journey, he said "I'll get it away

by all means” to Kokurou who nursed them without eating nor drinking. Kokurou believed those words in tears.

Originally, he himself wanted to go look for it, but he hated being separated from Nerei. Besides, to Gareos who was a first-class warrior in the country, leaving this to him is a good choice.

Concerned with the result, contrary to the time when he should be arriving, Gareos didn’t come back. Was he attacked by a brutal demon on his trip to find the medicinal herb? Or is he attacked by humans who were concealing for an ambush?

However, days passed, but there is no news of Gareos at all, and the worst part is, Blansa is at her limit.

Her usually healthy skin changed into a darker color, withering like a dry and dead tree, and she was unable to put out her voice freely anymore. Her beautiful face was so pitiful that you’ll seem to cry just from looking at it.

There is only one medicine. Of course Kokurou who was against it was determined that it should be administered to Nerei, her true elder sister. It’s because Nerei’s illness is spreading faster.

But Leowald who was unable to see Kokurou seized with despair, began to rage, and before things get out of control, with his little authority in between, he decided to have Kokurou behave himself in prison.

Receiving an unexpected surprise, Kokurou who have regained his consciousness, noticed that he was in jail. Leowald who came over to the prison, declared to him in this manner.

“It will be alright. I’ll save Nerei by all means”

Kokurou gave a serious look towards the words Leowald had said, and regaining his presence of mind, left his body to the drowsiness which attacked suddenly as a result of several days without sleep.

And when Kokourou woke up, he heard the words of Leowald who came over to the prison, with his face dyed in despair.

“I’m sorry. Blansa was the only one I could save”

At that time, Kokuro has become strange. Wails resounded from the prison all day long, and three days later, the hair of the man who came out of prison has been changed to an irregular white and black pattern.

Everyone held their breath in his changes, he with a few words.

“I want to mourn for my elder sister”

And with that, everyone agreed to it and the funeral was done solemnly at that time it rained, and the rain that should be cold, seem to feel hot for some reason.

The rain continued for a long time, but there is no sign of crying of anyone at all. Then, some good news had arrived.

“Gareos have returned”

Everyone who has heard the news led their breath.

“The medicinal herb was certainly grasped in his hands. However.....it was too late”

Yes. He didn't make it. With a ragged body, full of mud and bruises, he came back wounded all over, but he.....didn't make it in time.

Then, suddenly, a ray of light flashed. When they noticed it, the sword of Kokuro had penetrated the body of Gareos.

“W-why.....”

Unable to endure, Mimir held her hands through her mouth.

“then that fellow began attacking every person in the place indiscriminately”

That look that is warped beyond the thoughts of anyone, as if an Asura had manifested in this world. Series of black and with flashes ran with a speed of light.

Leowald faced him to stop his rampaging, but is instinctively been overwhelmed by his power.

But he could not go with that. At that moment, a sword had cut through his body, and like how he did it with Lendock, Kokuro lunged the blade in his chest.

And with a few words, Kokurou

“...nothing but lies”

Jumped out of the Great Tree.

“Then, we desperately searched for that guy.....but he was not found. Though I had escaped death, Gareos’ wasn’t in an instant, and father has passed away because of the wound, too. And in such timing, the [Evila] attacked”

Although they had succeeded in the defense somehow, they took a lot of damage. Succeeding in extracting information from the captured [Evila], they have found out that Kokurou had fed them the information and gave them an opening to attack.

“That guy was serious in crushing this country. It happened not only once, but for many times. But with the help of the Three Beast Warriors and Rarashik and the others, we manage to overcome it somehow.....”

Even then the person who had lost was still at large. Kokurou’s insurrection gave the [Gabranth] a very deep wound.

“That guy didn’t appear after a while. Though there was the thought that he had died somewhere, but.....as expected, he’s still alive”

After Leowald ended his story, no one gave a word, and silence dominated the room. They seem to be wondering on how they would react to the past that they couldn’t have imagined happening.

However, Mimir resolved herself and opened her mouth.

“Bu-but then, mother, if I’m not mistaken, I heard that mother’s father had died of sickness”

Not only Mimir, this was also told to all the people who didn’t know Kokurou.

“It is so. As a result of this, I have lied to all of you. The people who knew that scandal, most of them have already been killed by Kokurou. After that, the Konigh name was treated as misfortune, so I was married to this man immediately, casting away that name”

“S-so that’s why..... But why didn’t mother and father tell the truth?”

To everyone who was seeking for the answer, they faced the two.

“.....That’s because we don’t want to convey that we [Gabranth] had a traitor appeared in history. Fortunately, Kokurou is judged to have died, and we thought that the truth would continue to be hidden in the darkness”

However, Kokurou didn’t die but have only lied low so far.

The bond of the beastmen is believed to be so strong that it’s incomparable to the [Humas] and [Evila]. Even if you read the history, there is only the fact that Kokurou was the only person who have caused a revolt. Therefore, thoughtlessly informing them will only cause those bonds to be filled with insecurity..... apparently, I was wrong”

Leowald lifted his face with eyes looking at someplace distant.

“No matter how long you hide it, truth will be revealed sooner or later. There isn’t a beastman shaken by such thing. Certainly, it was a disgusting past, and now it caused a disaster in this country. For that very reason, I cannot let that tragedy break the power of our bonds”

He looked at everybody with eyes filled with reassurance. In answer to that, they gave a small nod.

“The opponent is not only Kokurou. Accompanied by that fellow..... is the Former Demon King Avoros”

The sound of catching one’s breath was heard over that name.

“Either way, what we have got in the last duel was huge. The power of the former demon king is on another level. Also, all of those guys who are under him possess an aura that is way far from normal either. However, this time, we [Gabranth] and the [Evila] will fight along together”

“Ah.....Hiro-sama”

Leowald’s cheeks turned with a faint smile at the name Mimir muttered.

“Ah, if we assume that Hiro whom knocked me down will also give a hand, there will be no other thing as reassuring as this”

“But father! Kokurou is a beastman, isn’t he?”

As if he doesn't like the idea of relying on an unrelated person, Lenion says in a bad mood.

"I know. Kokurou is a [Gabranth] and must be dealt by us"

"Father..... so you do get it"

"Of course. The matters of the [Gabranth] must be settled by the [Gabranth]. However, the enemy is not only Kokurou. Perhaps, if this becomes a war, the former demon king will spend some war potential, too. the possibility of us hitting a rough spot is high. To that degreeis Avoros' strength"

Everyone swallowed their saliva at the fact that Leowald admitted.

"That's why. It is necessary to contact the [Evila], and quickly expand our war potential from now on"

No one said anything to the legitimacy of that proposal. But being worried about something, Lenion opened his mouth.

".....say, perhaps, are they by any chance cooperating with the [Humas]?"

"....."

Ever since, The [Evila] had deep connections with the [Humas]. They are only seized and treated as livestock by them. The majority of the [Gabranth] have similar thoughts, too.

"N-no way, Hiiro-sama is a human too!"

Lenion clicks his tongue on the scream of Mimir.

"I know that already! But I heard that that fellow was summoned from another world, right? In other words, he's not probably totally with the [Humas]!"

"th-that's....."

Surely, Hiiro was certainly classified as one of the [Humas], but as Lenion said, there are no basis to decide if he really was with them.

Though Mimir trusts Hiiro completely, he came from [Humas] where they have no relations. Even if he's a human, that doesn't mean that you can rely on all the other humans.

She has also heard the story that he is a human being. Therefore she understood the reason for Lenion's uneasy feelings.

"Well, what do you think, father?"

He pressed Leowald for an answer. Then, he quivered his lips gently.

"There isn't any country in which the reigning king had a complete grasp of their arms at all"

"I thought so too"

Lenion gave a light smile.

"However"

"Huh?"

"If the country changes, it may be possible to negotiate"

"Haa!? What are you saying, father!"

Lenion who was completely relieved earlier, yelled reflexively at that remark.

"Just listen to me first"

"Guh.....just what is it?"

"Certainly, the present nation that King Rudolph had unified is untrustworthy. It's because that country was painted with full of lies. Even forming an alliance, we don't know when we will be stabbed in the back"

"Then, the more it's necessary to think about it....."

"But if that person changes, the country will also change, too"

Everyone who heard those words was amazed. However, only Leowald fixed his eyes on that person..... staring at Regulus,

"Explain yourself, Regulus"

And demanded an explanation from him.

"As you wish. If that person changes, the country also changes. Do you understand, Lenion?"

"....."

Looking at him who still remained silent,

“Listen here, the current king right now, for me who is still immature, is imbecility in itself. Hero summoning, and even breaking the conference..... perhaps, they really are connected with the former demon king”

“Wha-!?”

“Hohou, so you noticed too, Regulus”

“Yes, otherwise tearing the conference apart won’t simply lead to the war breaking out. Probably, the former demon king negotiated with King Rudolf with some means and made a plan beforehand. Though we have got into it to take advantage, there should be someone who was set up to catch us off guard at any time”

Everyone was surprised, but only Leowald groaned with admiration.

“Simply because of the thought that they have planned something, rather than an alliance, they had called for a temporary truce. An agreement not to interfere with each other more than necessary”

“So?”

“King Rudolf, from the beginning, doesn’t want to form an alliance at all, simple as that. He thought of nothing but murdering the Demon King at that place. If it’s for the sake of the country, it is necessary to recommend forming an alliance, and he should have borrowed our hands to kill the Demon King. And yet, he didn’t make any objections against my demand at all, and for only killing the demon king, he even dispatched the heroes with us to act as a decoy to the [Demon Country]. That time, he already.....No, he was already no longer a king for some time”

“.....”

“A grudge perhaps..... a personal grudge is clearly involved in this matter. Therefore, father isn’t assertive to make an alliance with them, right?”

“Ah, so it’s like that. But it’s also a fact that this is a good opportunity. With this, [Xaos] should be cleaned off and moved. However, even after they did this and that, one irregular had ended it all in a massive failure”

Of course, it's Hiiro we are speaking of.

"A king who moves for such a personal grudge cannot lead a country to a better course. The country of the foolish king who doesn't mind its people at all will eventually get corrupted later on"

"Is this the reason why you said something about the country changing, big brother?"

"Yes. The country will change. The people will have no choice but to change. Isn't that right, Lenion?"

".....?"

"Not King Rudolf, but one who loves his own country, his own people. If a person who loves peace above all stand on top, this will change the country"

"Is there such a human being?!"

"I don't know"

Leowald have answered so.

"It has never been managed in a political situation. However a person who has the power blowing it off completely must take the top, or the country won't change"

Chapter 210 - Judom Stands!

With King Rudolf having not come back yet, the royalty and the nobles were holding a meeting, discussing about the future measures, but most of it led to unproductive arguments.

Some say that the blunder of the king is caused the people who supported it, some blame the responsibility to each other, some try to solve that responsibility with money of all things, while some at this occasion try to grasp power, everyone has been dyed with their own interests and desires.

But with the king absent, now that the crisis in the country have come, they didn't know when the other countries will attack. They are hesitating to run as a leader and stood on top simply because of the thoughts of taking responsibility when they lost.

I want to stand on top. I want to use power. However, I don't want to fail. I don't want to take responsibility. Such thoughts make up the contents of the meeting.

But rurumors flow to the citizens and insecurity is spreading. The soldiers who know the circumstances feared the time when the [Evila] will retaliate. With disorder after disorder, the country had started titling.

Opening the meeting room door, a person entered. Although all the eyes now became focused on the newcomer, that person give off a sharp glint to the people who are not faced by his dignified behavior.

“How long will you intend to do such futile arguments?!”

He was the guild master, Judom Lankars. Judom grinds his teeth with anger at the nobles supporting the country.

“H-how rude!”

“We are talking right now.....wait, are you Judom Lankars?”

The nobility became aware of the identity of Judom Lankas stiffened.

“You bastard! You, to the king! Why are you not able to bring back the king!”

"Yes, that's right! You who is the guild master should have given priority to the king's life who was carrying the country in his shoulders above all!"

"It's because of you good-for-nothing that we're fighting in this situation!"

They really say what they want on him. But Judom does not feel anger for such words. Under this kind of situations, normally, other people won't be able to stomach their attitudes which put blame on others.

Judom opened his eyes with fury, lifts his right foot, and then stomped the floor.

THUD!

That moment, from the center of the impact a ripple extended and greatly shook the room. A person with no self-confidence would have collapsed being unable to stand that alone.

"Wh-what.....!?"

Someone was heard muttering that.

".....I want to ask something"

All of the eyes turned to Judom as he opened his mouth. Everyone fell silent and stared at him, dumbfounded.

"Is there someone who has the mind to mend the inclination of this country?"

"Why of course there is!"

"That's right! They are the nobles given power to support this country!"

"To begin with, why are you saying that our meeting is useless? That is what we are discussing all about in the first place!"

Though each of them have their own opinions, the persuasive power could not be felt on each and everyone of them.

"Hasn't the information reached you already? That the king has undergone complete change"

Everybody went silent to those words. He considered this silence as a yes.

"In addition the cabinet minister, you have been aware of the commanding

officer dying on the spot, right?”

“.....”

“This country has tilted in a big way right now. So, in order for you to correct that, you did this meeting....you said?”

“Y-Yes, that’s right.....”

“Then why doesn’t anyone issue instructions! The soldiers are restless, making all the people wrapped up in insecurity right now! Simply because of such situation, you who should be taking the initiative should lead everyone proactively!”

Almost all of them have averted their eyes from Judom’s filled with spirit.

“Making loud disputes in a small room, what can you change with that! If you still have the pride of representing the country, how about extending that feeble arms of yours to the people!”

It was a sound argument. No one can argue back, only being able to gush out the sweat from their foreheads.

“.....Anyway, you lot. You want to succeed in life, but you are scared of failing under your command, is that what you mean?”

“s-such reason.....we never think such a thing.....”

His voice as completely trembling. He was also exactly thinking the same.

“You want to rise up, but the responsibility is too heavy for you. That’s why you want to let somebody bear the brunt, so desperate to snatch profits from the back.....am I right?”

“H-how rude! We cannot do such a thing! In the first place the country isn’t that much weak and, in this way, arguing important matters.....”

“Shut up you cowards!”

He stomps the floor and everyone received the impact once again. Most of them are screaming while clinging to the table.

“Did you say I should have given priority to the life of the king? Wrong! The thing that you should protect the most is the country! The country that cannot

exist without its people! If it's not possible to move for the sake of the people, then what kind of country is that in the first place!"

"Hii!"

At his wit's end, the person in argument with Judom flinched.

"Decide it here! To those who want to stand on the top of this country now, raise the hand of the person who would dare to give instructions to all!"

Then, to that people who are in the place, they can only watch each other's complexions. It seems that no one wants to take the initiative to become the substitute of the king after all.

Surely, rising on top of a country in crisis is a critical situation, so the responsibility of defending the country will go to the top. And they are scared of it.

(.....is this the limit of what you can do?.....)

It's truly saddening. How long will this country remain so weak? Rather than seeking the smiles as they look their eyes at the future, these people only think of obtaining tomorrow's small change.

(Rudolf.....is this really the current state of the country that you established.....?)

He remembered the face of his close friend who completely changed as he grinds his teeth.

He then beats the table, making everyone startled.

"I know what you are feeling right now, but I'll say this once again. The qualifications of carrying the country's back depends your hands!"

And let out an overpowering bloodlust, coercing them.

"If you still remain being afraid, you will save nothing! This is something important! Even if it's difficult and painful to compare, you cannot protect anything if you run away!"

Once again, the nobles looked at each other.

"So If you think of raising the country up even a little and be recognized, go all

out and display that fighting spirit of yours, you dullards!"

This also, even though he himself came from the common folk, he passed his anger at them, but felt disgusted at the nobles who didn't even feel the drive to retort away.

".....is that all you can answer?"

Even after he looked at them who turned their heads to each other restlessly, a short sigh spills forth.

".....I see. Then you protect your own house. You are fools whom want to be looked after, but, I guess you can protect your own family. If you cannot do it.....then you can sleep with the other people who can, can't you?"

When Judom finished his speech, Well, the captain of the nation's second armed forces appears from behind. And after bowing quickly,

"I have a report to all of you. This is a message from the queen"

Whether that is expected or not, the people whose complexions have improved came out. Perhaps they are thinking that the queen would protect themselves.

"This is a strict order from her majesty. Become everyone's leader and take responsibility to raise this country.....I appoint you, Judom Lankas-dono"

"Wha!?"

The people asked again as if doubting their ears, but,

"She decided to entrust the full power of the country to Judom. This is the letter"

He opened the paper which is held in his hand. The signature of the queen was written there too. Knowing that this is real, everyone turned pale.

".....the truth is, I really believe that there was actually a person who is more suitable than me here, but....."

He himself is of common blood to the last drop. Even though he has the title of the Guild Master, he came out to a place no one could reach. Therefore, he thought that a noble with reliable power should stand to the top, or so he

thought.

However, to entrust it to any of the person here is impossible.

"This is sad.....though you should have been the same nobles who struggled for the sake of these people in the first place....."

Having a shadow on his expression, he tightened his face and immediately turned back. Then, he spoke his last words without facing them any longer.

"I'll do something about this. To show my gratitude to my own country!"

To them who fell silent, Judom steps out of the room, being stared by without saying anything. Well gave a light bow too, and also went away.

After that, Judom gathered his reliable friends and first decided to strengthen the defense of the country. He himself takes the lead, goes out of the town proactively and informs the truth to the citizens.

Though if it is to avoid confusion, perhaps he should not talk of it in the first place, but since the nobles couldn't believe it, he wanted the people to have a sense of crisis even a little.

Though he decided that he will protect them even if it costs his own life supposed the danger approaches, still, he isn't confident that he cannot protect everyone as possible. For this reason, he wanted to do something for the people, too, in order to remove their insecurities even a little. Not shutting inside the castle and leaving the citizens alone, but facing them and giving them instructions is important.

Although many are confused with the attitude of Judom at first, gradually, they were able to put their trust in him. Thinking about it, in case of emergency, Judom always stood in the battlefield and became the symbol for everyone. Therefore everyone realizes that Judom is reliable.

And as for the soldiers, feeling admiration for his splendid leadership ability, Well together with Judom worked hard to meet their expectations.

(Rudolf, I don't know what you have thought about, but this country, I won't let you destroy it!)

He turned his eyes with all determination to the sky.

Chapter 211 - Hiiro searches for something

In a dim basement, a light bulb installed in the ceiling gave off a weak light, barely reaching what's beneath it. Even though it was already noon, the light outside does not reach the room.

Regardless of night or day, there is no change in the darkness of the interior. It is not much of a big room, which has five shelves tightly packed with many books and documents.

And directly underneath what the light illuminated, was the figure of Okamura Hiiro who was turning over the pages of a book, leaning his back at a shelf.

Mountain of books he already read piled up around him in a disorderly manner, but Hiiro doesn't mind and concentrated reading wholeheartedly, without minding the dust fluttering about.

Upon closing a book, he then throws it away as if it is a trash, then takes another book again and opens the cover. That pattern is repeated all over again.

"Hmm, each and every one of it is really interesting. Though participating in that war is really such a pain in the ass"

He is currently at the basement of the Fortuna Great Library, the information treasury of the Demon Country - Xaos. Well, you could say that reading the books here is his purpose of coming here at the very start.

In this Fortuna Great Library, though it is open to the general public, it also restricted access to a lot of books.

The restriction is divided into Depth 1 to Depth 5, where Depth 5 is only available for access to the Royal Family. To read them, a reading permit is necessary.

After meeting Lilyn on a certain day, he negotiated with her in order to gain access and read the books in Depth 5. She was to manage her connections to make him gain access to read the books in Depth 5 somehow or other.

However, he met the Demon Lord Eveam in an unexpected encounter, and offered a reading permit as a compensation to participate in the war. Rather than depending on Lilyn, Hiyo who thought that hers is more legitimate, took this opportunity and participated in the war, splendidly obtaining his reading permit.

But with problems occurring one after the other, he wasn't able to enter the library till now, and after the duel, Hiyo who was called the "Hero of Evila" obtained freedom at long last and indulged himself at ease in his hobby.

Though one week has passed after the duel, apparently, the declaration of the former Demon Lord Avoros seemed to be the truth when he asked Eveam about it.

Of course, Eveam did not doubt what Avoros had said from the very beginning. It is not strange to do that if it's him.

But it's still too early to assume that opinion without any proof. Therefore, as a result of their deliberate investigation, it was found out that Avoros had hard-to-deal-with talented underlings from each continent, and seems to have a well-thought plan of world domination.

(That kid really is a Demon Lord template)

He never thought that he will be hearing the words 'world domination' from someone else's mouth. Muttering those embarrassing words without hesitation, he made that statement it without a single bit of fear as if it is already established as a truth.

(.....because of that demon king template, it seems this will become more troublesome from now on)

With the [Evila] and the [Gabranth]'s efforts to give helping hands to one another, Lilyn's dream got one step closer to realization, and being an irregular again here keeps him from being bored in this world.

(Oh well, now that the opposing side has war potential reinforcements, they seem to be busy with war preparations, but not a single war happen yet. Besides, the Demon lord also is moving, so if something happens, she'll make sure to inform them)

Because he didn't hear any news of Avoros' conspicuous movements, he intends to continue remaining silent.

As for without doing anything and watching the duel till the end, his purpose might be confirming their war potential. In that way he can plan thoroughly and when victory is ensured, he will give that announcement again.

(Nay, that is a Demon Lord Template. There is a possibility that he will attack without notice.....or.....)

With that Demon Lord, you can't expect courtesy like notifying them about the war.

(Well, that's why the Demon Lord is always thinking of precautions against it every single day, but.....)

Still, it is possible for him to pass, even through a hole in a needle. From the time being, when they started exchanging large information with the [Gabranth], Avoros' companions seems to have attacked them resulting to serious damages, and it he heard that their discussions are not coming up with anything.

Following a pattern, Hiiro closes his book, and turned his attention to the book wound up like a scroll located on his left side.

"I looked over it lightly just in case, but is this the only thing that seems useful?"

He thought, picking the roll with his hand. And when he opened the contents quickly,

".....but the fiery zeal isn't in the original pattern"

He rolled back the scroll again while saying so, then put it in his bosom. He also took a permit to take out books just in case, but on the condition that it must not be shown to others excessively.

This Depth 5 room contains mouth-dripping abundance of knowledge, to the extent that you will be thrilled being unable to decide which to choose because of the excitement.

There is a great diversity of books ranging from the introduction to the

composition of this world, the biographies of past heroes, and even countless ancient magic written down and recorded to keep your butt from being lifted from the chair.

And also as expected, there are also banned books which were concealed by the country. Hiiro however, is looking for a book which has something recorded by all means.

And that book, is the scroll which he put in his bosom. He searched for it, judging that he will need it when the time comes.

(Though I have read it for some time, it won't activate probably as long as I don't speak it out loud.....")

His first objective is obtained for the time being, but he have not been able to completely decipher the knowledge yet. With a happy sense of accomplishment obtaining such knowledge, Hiiro suddenly felt a presence.

(Who.....? But only those who are given permission are allowed to come here.....)

And the only one permitted is Hiiro. Therefore, Lilyn should not be able to come. That means, it is someone related to the Demon Lord.

He stood up slowly, not lowering his guard, directing a sharp glance towards the only entrance.

Clacking sounds echoed the floor, finally reaching his sight.

".....You are....."

The one who appeared there, was the Cruel Rank Four, Ornorth. With the face of a wolf, this [Evila] showing up in such darkness invites horror into your eyes.

But because he didn't feel any hostility coming from him, he judged that he's probably asked for a summoning from the Demon Lord.

"What do you want?"

He said, putting up an air of superiority. Then after a light pause,

"I want you to hear something from you"

It doesn't seem to be a summoning from the Demon Lord, apparently.

As a matter of fact, he had mostly guessed what he'd like to hear about. Rather, he asking these things was just good for him.

"But, how dare you to litter the whole place"

He looked at the state of the room in astonishment, then leaked out a sigh in his messy situation.

"Oh, these? Whatever. Since I can do this immediately"

Concentrating magic on the index finger of both hands,

BOOKS『書物』 and ORDER『整頓』

Writing it, then activating it immediately, the books which were scattered on the floor returned to the shelves by their own. Ornorth stared at such a spectacle with his mouth agape.

After a while, the surroundings were put into order as if the mess a little while ago was a lie.

".....I really still can't keep myself from being surprised by you"

With his breath being taken away, he restlessly stared at the arranged bookshelf.

"So, what do you want me to hear?"

"Ah y-yeah, about that"

Then, making a serious face,

"You, you can use Red Qi (Shakki), right?"

It was the question that he expected after all.

"Something like that.....I guess?"

Yes. That red aura Hiiro shown in the duel with Leowald that Ornoth had seen is certainly similar to his Red Qi.

".....So it's that after all. I am surprised, that you were able to use it at such a young age....."

".....I also want to ask you something"

“What is it?”

“You seem to be able to control Red Qi at will”

“.....”

“Red Qi needs a lot of concentration for it to be handled properly. Even I who is confident in magic power control cannot handle Red Qi freely.”

“I can’t even hold on Peerless Mode in place. Just barely”

“That should be obvious. In the first place, Red Qi is a technique a half-breed like me is good at, a blockhead who can neither use magic nor Bind Arts. Even for a half like me, it’s a special ability that no one had existed to defeat it. Because the combat method for using the Red Qi.....is the utilization of Grand Red Aura.

“Grand.....Red Aura?”

Taken aback, Hiiro took out the scroll from his bosom and switched his attention to it. Then, Ornorth raises his voice in surprise.

“Oh, so that means you have obtained it after all..... so you intend to master it, the Grand Red Aura?”

Certainly it is written in the scroll as Grand Red Aura, as specified by the language of this world.

“You, did you know of this?”

“Obviously. That’s because I put it there in the first place.”

His reply is honestly, very astonishing. According to the contents, numerous combat methods using Red Qi was written. But because it was written in a considerably subjective composition, there were many parts that are incomprehensible.

Therefore, he intended to obtain information from Ornorth who should know Red Qi, but he didn’t think of the possibility that the person himself wrote it and stand right before his eyes.

“But even so, you, to this scroll.....”

Hiiro opens his mouth after a while.

"That Grand Red Aura, tell me in detail. Of course, I'll pay a suitable reward for this"

What Hiiro's searching for, is a combat method that utilizes Red Qi which was written in a certain book. Ornorth is asking for the reason.

"Why do you want to study it? You're already quite strong enough, right?"

"Simple. I just want to boast a little."

He spat out words with ill humor. Ornorth motionlessly stared at that him.

"Boast.....huh. Is that sarcasm?"

Certainly if it's him, it might be. Frankly speaking, Hiiro's abilities are so high that anyone cannot help but recognize it. He knocked out that Beast King Leowald with his fist. It can't be helped if its sounds like a sarcasm.

"I am not satisfied. I don't intend to become a battle junkie, but I.....I can't afford to die either"

The other day, he remembered his conversation with Silva in the bath, and smiled wryly.

"No. I don't want to die just yet. That's why I need it - a power that does not rely on magic alone!"

Ornoth's cheeks immediately cramped after hearing the speech of the black-haired boy. Although he have gained such power, you can still say that it's not complete if you are still inexperienced.

Honestly, he thought that he was being sarcastic at first, but as he saw something in his eyes, he was able to understand it.

He is strong, that's for sure. However, that's because his unique magic is great. He certainly also has a high level, but even that, he's still a human being, so even if he came from a different world, so his physical ability cannot be that high to a degree.

If you challenge him to a duel where you cannot use magic altogether as proof, it's not possible for him to be there.

Therefore, when he said that he wants to attain power that does not rely on

magic alone, He admired that idea unconsciously.

He doesn't want to gain power for the reason of beating someone nor flaunting his own power just for satisfaction. It's simply because he just don't want to die just yet.

It was too simple for an answer, but he felt that is the truth, in which he admired.

(He is really an interesting boy)

As he looked at the boy who is faithful to his own desires, it gave him a mysterious feeling of wanting to support him.

(Is this the charm of the boy.....?)

As what he said, there will be a possibility of falling to a situation where magic could not be used from now on. As for that situation, it will be purely dependent on the stats of his level.

But there is be a limit. It's because it's passing through with just purely physical ability is easier said than done. He has probably understood that well, too.

That is the reason why he wanted to obtain the Grand Red Aura, a power that is not dependent on magic on his body.

He wanted to expand his fighting capabilities in times where magic is sealed. Besides, the [Evila] had owed a debt from him which lead to their victory.

(Truthfully speaking, Grand Red Aura is still an unknown power, as it chooses its own user. If that power is abused, it will surely cause a terrifying situation. However.....)

Upon looking at the ayes of Hiiro. With a whiff, he loosened his cheeks.

(But this boy? He'll be alright)

The ruler whom I serve believes in him, my best friend believes in him, the nation who praised his existence as a hero believes in him. So to say, I also believe in him as well.

".....fine with me. But I'll say this once"

Upon hearing it, Hiyo kept quiet and listened.

“Certainly, you can use Red Qi, but it may not be a hundred percent sure that you can master Grand Red Aura with just experience”

“Is that so?”

“Yeah. That’s because it’s originally a technique of someone with a unique characteristic like me, a half-breed. In the first place, it is a product resulted as a replacement of magic and Bind Arts.”

“I see. In other words I, who is not a half-breed has a possibility of not being able to acquire the technique.....”

Hiyo’s face clouded a little.

“That’s right. Even if there is nature, it is a very difficult work to keep everything balance. In case of us half-breeds, because there are two seeds that exist in our bodies, our capabilities to synthesize the two powers are excellent because we are born with it.”

“I can agree with that”

To begin with, Red Qi is a product of mixing life force and magic power exquisitely. With this alone, a precise and delicate control of power is required.

“To be frank, you may not master it even if you train hard. So, do you still want to take the challenge?”

“Of course”

He answered without delay. With this, I understand that he truly is an honest person at heart.

“.....I see”

Hiyo expressed a smile to those words.

“Re-really?!”

“Yeah. I’ll teach you everything I know”

How far can this boy go? I want to see to what extent can he reach.

Chapter 212 - Disappointed Ornoth

Though Ornorth had made an agreement with Hiiro to teach the methods of acquiring Grand Red Aura, because he is currently busy with political issues right now, he can't provide time to teach him personally.

So he had no other way but to use that time to review what's in the scroll by himself till he's available. However, as he scan the contents, he discovered that most of it were described in illustrations and seemed to be written in a language that Ornorth can only understand.

If it's an ordinary person, he/she might wait for Ornorth, but not for Hiiro, who has the convenient Word Magic. Using [Clarification (解明)], he decoded the encrypted characters somewhat.

He thought that with this, he won't need to ask Ornorth anymore, but he was too naïve. Yes, the encrypted characters can now be read, but he couldn't understand what it says, and because it tells all about mind and spirit theories, the explanation is so abstract it was difficult to comprehend.

For instance, the first thing written here is the method of generating Red Qi, but because Hiiro already have acquired it, it wasn't necessary, but that's not what's written here.

"You must focus and make your life force and magic power go like round and round. Be careful not to lose focus. If you lost it even once, it will return from what it was before. The trick is to straighten your back and let the power ooze out like round and round"

TN NOTE: I don't have sufficient knowledge to translate Japanese onomatopoeia like this one (グルグル)to English yet. Please forgive me for this.

.....are you a kid!

That was his first thoughts. Other than those round and round effects, there are so much abstract words that he can't understand the meaning no matter how hard he tried. As if this scroll is written by a kid at heart.

(there is too much gap in his face and his writing ability!)

He, thinking of Ornorth as a good-looking beast man who has a figure of a dauntless wolf, can only sigh at the situation. Sure, there are no problems with his etiquette and behavior. His manners are good, too.

(TN NOTE: Am I translating the right novel? Why do I feel that this will go the wrong way?)

“But that’s it. He is really bad at explaining”

Though he has written it in a really unique way, it can apparently be understood, somehow. But still, it was needed to carry it out on practice, so calling out Ornoth to correct him is necessary, or it will be useless.

As Hiiro leaked out a sigh as he rolled the scroll, Nikki and Camus came in. the two seemed to have clicked together apparently, so when they have free time, they go and play outside together with Mikadzuchi.

“Master, can you read this scroll?”

She asked, as she saw the scroll. Lilyn who said “As one would expect to my subordinate, to feel unsatisfied with his present strength, and have the desire to improve himself more!” seem pleased about it, so Nikki and Camus took interest in the contents.

But when he was asked to explain the contents that can’t be read, they dropped their shoulders in disappointment. Camus aside, it was more unreasonable for Nikki who cannot even control magic on her own. It became more depressing.

So to say, even if Nikki read the stuff, she won’t get it at all.

“Hmmm. So is it better to hear it from Ornorth-dono, I wonder?”

Perhaps what she said was the most efficient method, but right now, Ornorth has gone to the [Beast Kingdom·Passion]. As he inherited the trait of being a part-beastman, it seems that the person had acquired the duty of being the messenger of the [Demon Race·Evila].

Because it is evitable until he comes back, Hiiro was thinking of killing time in the Fortuna Great Library.

“Oh yeah, did that red loli came back?”

Lilyn, aka the red loli, together with Silva and Shamoe, and accompanied by

Mikadzuchi have gone to some business and traveled outside to the foreign territory.

Since Hiiro was intending to stay in the meantime until he became satisfied in reading the books in the library, she said that she has some business to take care of and went out.

Well, to begin with, her purpose in coming to the country in the first place was to meet an acquaintance of hers near the country, so she left.

“She haven’t come back yet!”

“is that so?”

“.....Hiiro.....free time?”

Camus who didn’t move like some decoration spoke up.

“I don’t have free time. I have books I haven’t read yet.....there is only that”

In a room allotted by Eveam, Hiiro sat down on the bed and directed his gaze at his left. From there, piled up five to six books.

They are books that came from Depth 5, but since he has gotten the ‘permit to carry’ from Eveam, it’s all right. Still, because they are included in the list of banned books, he can’t show it to other people.

Therefore he wrote the characters [Reading Forbidden]『禁読』and invoked it, making the writings move and the reading impossible for the time being. In addition, even if someone carries it around, he can trace its location wherever it goes because of his magical power, of course, with Eveam’s permission too. But it is still necessary to have a word with her first before bringing it out.

“Town.....go?”

“Town? To do what?”

“stroll around with Hiiro.....Just once”

It seems that they want to invite him for a stroll, but as Nikki who is next to him excitedly waited him to accept,

“.....it’s troublesome. You two should probably go on your own”

She became depressed in a glance. But Camus, who was wearing a deadpan

expression as usual,

“want to go.....with Hiiro”

“No, I still have my books to.....”

“want to come.....ne?”

“th-thas wight!”

Camus who gained Nikki as an ally pressed him further. Now, two pairs of puppy eyes corner him down.

“.....no good?”

TN NOTE: YES! Let the ship go to the right way! Wait a mi-Oh shit! Abort! It's a trap!

“uu～master～”

With the two being so persistent, he can only resign himself and join. Well, he judged that if this goes on he won't be able to read the books at ease.

Besides, dinner will be soon, so he thought that going out to eat outside would be better for once. He heard recently from the rumors that there is a restaurant that has laid new items in their menu.

He certainly enjoys the dishes in the castle which Musun made, but perhaps a change will be better once in a while.

Closing the laid scroll, he put it in his bosom and left the bed.

“Okay. I'll go. But I won't look for any lost children, understand?”

“.....Un!”

“Yay-desuzoo!”

The two broke into smiles as if they have achieved their long-cherished ambition.

Inside a dim cave, strange blue light shines the surroundings. The origin of the light were four blue megaliths. Roots of a plant-like something entangle and wrap the stones. And from the blue lights shining up the cave, something was born.

Something which does not belong to the cave appeared on the center of the space. It's a throne where a King sits down upon. There, a young boy sits on it, and having made up his mind, stands up and calls a white-haired woman who

waited next to him.

“Did you call for me, Your Majesty Avoros?”

The boy is named Avoros, with the title of former Demon Lord. A few days ago, in the duel between the [Evila] and the [Gabranth], which resulted in an alliance by the words of encouragement from his younger sister Eveam, he appeared before them and did a certain declaration.

“Yeah. I’ll be going out for a moment”

The woman’s name is called Valkria, which Avoros calls as No. 5.

“Do you want a company?”

“No. but because I’ll be moving, you bring Isuca here”

“Understood. Please take care”

“It’s alright. i feel a little nostalgic though.....because I’ll be meeting with a good ol’ friend”

As No. 5 bows her head in respect, Avoros raised his hand in response, then left the place and went.

Chapter 213 - Reunion with an Old Friend

Victorias. The Kingdom of the [Humas].

From there, a lone small hut was built, hidden at the very edge of the residential area. It's so small that you'll never think of it as a dwelling place, other than the fact that it looks so old.

Among the tall grass that has overgrown the surroundings, clearly indicating the place not having been maintained for many years, one old woman lives in such shed.

When her fortunetelling in the main street in the town ends, she buys food then returns to the hut, spending her time in peace, but right now.....

As she put the bread that has been bought as usual in the tableware, poured milk into the glass, and sat in her creaky chair,

"To think that you are only in such a place"

Hearing a shrill voice of a child from behind, she, who was taken aback, turned around. Standing there was a child who was the source of the voice.

The old woman opened her eyes wide, stiffened as she saw the child.

"I have looked for you everywhere. But I never thought that you're here in the Human King's Imperial Capital all along"

As if giving herself up, the old woman closes her eyes and gives him a sigh. Then she opens them slowly, and begins to squeeze out her words.

"You knew this one well, right.....Avoros?"

She knew it was the former Demon Lord all along. As well as the purpose for why he came here.

Then, the old woman asks the black robed existence behind his back.

"So, is that your current pawn?"

She didn't say 'subordinate'. The reason why is she's fully aware of the fact that this person treats people as if they were his chess pieces. Then, laughing as

if hearing a funny joke,

“Shall I introduce this one to you?”

He showed a smile so shady it fills you with disgust. With the fact she was caught here, makes her unable to act poorly.

“Nay, rather than that, how about saying what you want to get this over with?”

“Fufufu, as hasty as ever. This, after not meeting again for a long time? Don’t you think that I intend to bloom with you, a flower from an old tale?”

Did you came here just to tell me such talk?”

“.....Tsk, lacking a sense of humor, as always”

Avoros shrugs his shoulders exaggeratedly, then utters a sigh. He looks around at the surroundings once again.

“But for Alicia of Foresight to hide and live in such a filthy place.....”

“The tongues that call that name are no longer in this world. I don’t use it anymore”

“Really? Oh yeah, what do you call yourself again? Ah! It’s.....Maricris Bluenote, right?”

“.....”

“Nevertheless, the book that you wrote, what the heck is that? I had skimmed it over, but.....really, what kind of joke is that?”

The bloodlust which wasn’t felt till then, surrounds her whole body, pricking like needles. She takes a gulp unconsciously, and with a whiff, the bloodlust stops.

“Whoops, sorry about that. It’s just a mistake.....so pass me out from that, ‘kay? Besides, that book is terrible. The composition looked like its making fun of its main character”

“.....”

“I don’t know what your intentions are in writing that thing, besides the fact that you wrote it in various ways, really. But since when have you become an

outsider? Though being able to survive after knowing that thing is commendable”

Avoros’ eyes narrowed upon her. Like totally cornering its prey, his intent to hunt afterwards is being transmitted to her.

“.....Who knows, it doesn’t mean that I’m affecting anybody”

“Hee”

“You know, it’s simply because knowing that thing makes me like an eagle taking over a pen with its hand”

“What are you aiming for?”

“And what if I don’t speak?”

“You can remain silent, but...”

A murderous intent came out from Avoros once again. Though it reached the point where she wants to withdraw instinctively, she stood firmly on the floor, clenching it by her toes.

The standoff continued after a little while, but then Avoros shakes his head in disgust.

“Your obstinacy haven’t been changed just like in the past. How disappointing”

“That’s Koch’s words, isn’t it? Besides, isn’t that too much Demonic pressure for an old woman?

“Ahahaha! What are you saying! You’re only an old woman on the outside”

“.....”

“Until when will you have such an ugly face? And that way of talking, too. Are you ashamed for so long that you can’t even show your real face at this late hour?”

As Avoros stared at Maricris, she closed her eyes, as if giving up herself. Then, she took something from her bosom and put it her mouth. Then, surprisingly, her wrinkled, rough skin turned young and glossy.

As if coming back to life, her grey hair discolored by age turned into a

beautiful dark blue. Her height increased, too, finally appearing a woman of an excellent caliber.

Rejuvenation. It's something that cannot be expressed in words. With it, you'll never think that the ponytailed young beauty right now is an old woman just earlier.

Avoros, seeing such spectacle of Maricriss, claps his hands in entertainment.

"Uh-huh. You in that figure is the best after all"

"....."

"This for sure, is the woman whom I want to take in for once back then"

"..... I refuse your proposal, no matter what you say to me"

A clear sweet voice sounded the interior.

"Well, I don't really have the luxury to do such a thing now at this late hour. You too are a wonderful grandmother, despite how young you look right now. Your young daughter really begins to look like you"

"Oh my, do you think saying such things to the grandma makes you have the permission to catch my young daughter?"

"Hmm ~ if you see it in this way, aren't I even more popular? Don't you agree?"

"Well, only by your appearance"

"Ahaha! Your comeback really stings, you know ~"

Avoros has the charm which attracts anyone, regardless of age and gender. His personality on the other hand, is an epic failure.

TN NOTE: Okay... Avoros, please. Just be a bona fide villain okay? Ornorth is already dwindling here.

"By the way, Maricris.....can I tell you something important? I want you to come with me"

"I refuse"

"Ahaha! I thought that you'll decline, though I hoped that you'll think about

this a little”

“I cannot be with you even after death. Didn’t I already said that a long time ago?”

“.....”

“As long as you say that you want that wish to come true, I won’t give my consent”

Maricris sweared in a well-defined expression. Then, Avoros having broken his smile, moved his mouth with a serious face.

“You sure about that?”

“Yes. I’m sure of it”

“How can I convince you? Even in this world, you are.....”

“I don’t want that tragedy to repeat itself anymore”

Feeling the determination of Maricris, Avoros replying with an ‘is that so’ showed a little gloom in his expression.

“I am what I am, therefore I’ll do my thing in my own way. this ismy atonement”

“.....Even if I kill you here.....you won’t?”

“I won’t”

“Then, even if I say that the life of all these countries are hanging in a balance?”

Even if all the people in this world becomes my hostage? he still expressed a cruel smile as he posed those words. But Maricris didn’t falter at all.

“Never”

Her will didn’t waver.

“.....Haaa”

What are you thinking, Avoros? he suddenly turned his heel and stepped out of the room. Does he really intend to dispose of a nation as expected? To Maricris who is making a stiff expression,

“.....A war will begin from now on”

“.....Eh?”

Making a sudden stop, he told Maricris who in turn became dumbfounded.

“It’s a war that involves the world as a whole”

“You, you still, after all.....!”

Avoros then turned his back to her, and said.

“I hope that you still remember, Maricris.....No, Alicia”

“..... ?”

“That I want to obtain this whole world by all means”

“.....Avoros”

He tried to move his legs for a second time, this time giving words as he goes out.

“You might be killed here. You want to correct that mistake of yours, right? Then I in this side is more correct. After all, you decided to be alive till the last minute”

He turned a little towards Maricris’ face.

“See you, Alicia, it was fun after a long time. Though it would be fine whether or not I have met you”

“Avoros.....”

“I’ll show you the correct answer. You should look forward to it”

After those words, Avoros left the room along with the figure in the black garment. At that spot where only silence remained, fatigue surged Maricris suddenly, exhausting her strength.

She sat on the chair, staggering. Cold sweat dripped down her whole body. It was after a long time that she experienced this much tension.

As she drank her milk at once to relieve her thirst,

“Avoros.....”

She whispered.

"Your way.....is hopeless"

But her thoughts reached no one anymore.

Chapter 214 - Hiiro and the Ape

Hiiro went sightseeing with Nikki and Camus. And because it's about time for dinner, he tried to find a good place to eat.

But Hiiro was naïve. How will this country treat someone like him? He surely didn't think about it.

"Ah, Hero-sama!"

"Woah, its true!"

"is that really Hiiro-sama?!"

He shined like a sore thumb wherever he goes.

"Oooh~ As expected of my master-desuzo! I am proud as a disciple-desuzo!
Ahem!"

"Hiiro.....popular"

Nikki held her chest in pride to the popularity of his master, though Camus has the same deadpan expression as before.

As the citizens gather one after the other so much that it's kind of irritating, Hiiro, who had no other choice, grabs Nikki by the scruff,

"Anyway, let's look for a place with no people"

"Ugu.....can't.....cant breath desujoo.....!?"

".....understood"

Nikki gave a pained expression with her heck being strangled, but Hiiro didn't mind it while breaking through the place without care.

They entered an alley where no one is around, where they were able to stay somehow.

(Good grief, this has become a pain in the ass)

Hiiro used 『変化』 (Change) to morph himself from a human into an 'Evila'. It's not his usual 'Imp Race', but an 'Asura Race' which is similar to Camus.

And because his red robe draws attention, he changed it into a blue one. With this, they should be unable to distinguish Okamura Hiiro who saved their country.

“Oooh~ So cool, Master!”

“.....same.....same as Hiiro”

Though she's rubbing her neck that has been stangled, Nikki praised him in a high note. And for some reason, Camus seemed happy.

“Good. With this, we won't have any problems. Shall we look for a simple place to eat?”

Most of the people are still looking for Hiiro when they left the alley. For them, a hero who is wandering in the town with them is a must to see.

They received a lot of questions about Hiiro being seen or so, and they felt relieved that they didn't notice somehow. Meaning, when you say that he went over there, they will certainly follow suit.

(They're like an otaku group that has finally found their idol.....)

Just thinking about the large crowd surging at him made him shiver

But, with this, they were able to stroll peacefully on the surroundings without care, finally finding the shop they're looking for.

They say that there is a store that sells junk food-like things in Japan

SOFT AND FLUFFY DELICACIES

as written in the signboard. A sweet savory aroma drifted here, leading their feet as if they were magnetized.

What is brought into their eyes are round objects just like takoyaki, but tied like a balloon and suspended in the air, as if it's floating

“What is this?”

To the question of Hiiro, the store owner who noticed that a customer came, clasps her hands and pulls out a merchant's smile.

“Oh, Come, come! Try our 【Demon Country】Special - Fuwafuwa Fries, would you like to try one?”

He's like an old true-born Tokyoite raising his voice to make a fine living.

"Special? Is it good?"

"Of course it is! This Fuwafuwa Fries is made up of Fuwanpopo flowers deep-fried in oil. As for what the sauce is made up of, it's a secret!"

"Hohou, then one for....."

Then, something pulls his clothes in the rear. As he looked back, he saw Camus and Nikki with sparkling puppy eyes as if they are begging the master of the house. It seems that they want to try it, too.

".....old man, three, no.....make it six"

Thus he ordered two for each one of them.

"Gotcha. How does 450 Rigin sound?"

"Can I use the guild card?"

And particles of light gathered and took form of a card in his hand.

"You can. Please make a transfer on the stand over there"

As they look over, they saw a card on a silver ashtray-like container on the counter. Then, as he overlapped his card with the card present, he wished for a 450 Rigin transfer permission. With this, the payment should end safely.

".....good, payment confirmed! Here you go!"

The old man picks up the card and takes a look. Apparently, he has received the confirmation somehow, and handed the Fuwafuwa Fries over.

It's really like a balloon with gas and tied with a string, floating buoyantly as it is.

"Oh yeah, you can also eat the string as it is made up of candy!"

Because it has a teeny weenie kid size upon seeing it closer, he swallowed the whole thing in one bite.

The coating is crunchy and savory, and has an aroma of an elegant flower. Additionally, the sweet thick honey oozing from the inside is very yummy.

(This is delicious..... it will certainly become a hit for children)

(TN NOTE: As expected of our loli magnet protagonist! To think of the children's interests first and foremost!)

While thinking so, his view switched to Nikki with flushed cheeks as she stuff her mouth with great relish. Then she took the two pieces in her mouth in one go.

"This kid..... wait, why are you too, Nitoryuu!?"

"Nnom?"

Surprisingly, there is another child here. Camus stuffs two in his mouth just like Nikki.

(Oh well, nevermind)

But the moment when Hiiro opens his mouth to take a bite of the Fuwafuwa Fries,

Swish!

A shadow passed through his eyes with amazing swiftness, and the Fuwafuwa Fries in his right hand had disappeared.

"What!?"

As if it's a serious matter, he looked around restlessly, and found the culprit on a building.

The creature is like a small squirrel monkey, and on its hand is the Fuwafuwa Fries that it took from Hiiro's hand a while ago.

".....Kiki?"

The monkey smiles impudently, causing the veins in Hiiro's forehead to swell blue.

"Ma, master.....?"

"Hi, Hiiro.....?"

The two people murmured, while taking distance from Hiiro who was about to burst with anger.

".....Fufufufufu"

The moment Camus and Nikki saw Hiiro's dark smile, they took a gulp and had frozen in place.

"Some nerve you have, you monkey thief. Look forward to my gratitude for taking my pleasure away"

Hiiro kicks the ground and chases after the monkey.

Nikki and Camus who are left can only see him off in utter amazement.

As Hiiro was giving chase to the monkey who stole his Fuwafuwa Fries, he realized that he had come out to a foreign territory.

"Tsk, curse you, thieving monkey! Don't you think that you had escaped!" without minding his appearance, he pursued it with the characters 『探索』(Search).

".....gigi?"

The monkey made an insulting grin as if treating him like a fool, causing his anger to shoot up fast.

"Prepare yourself, you little critter! I'm going to show you who's on top of the food chai.....n?"

Then, for some reason, it jumped towards his place.

"are you an idiot! Well, still works for me!"

He wrote and shoot 『捕縛』(Arrest) towards the monkey in an instant. As it hit the monkey,

Bachin!!

The characters were repelled and dispersed.

"What!?"

Although being surprised, the monkey jumps towards his face, scratches his cheeks with its sharp fingernails, uses it as a jumping platform, then does a backflip and finally lands on the ground smoothly.

"It hurts....."

He covers his scratched face with his hands by reflex, but then notices something for the first time.....Wait, my glasses are missing!

As he look up towards the monkey, it was already wearing his glasses in its small head, laughing at him. Moreover, it is already nibbling the Fuwafuwa Fries it was holding.

“.....fufufufufu, is that what you wanted?..... I see, I see.....”

It seems that preaching won't be enough for this monkey. A punishment will be necessary.

“I will definitely roast you brown!”

The monkey twitched. It seems that it understood that he's now very angry. It turned its body behind, preparing to escape.

“DO you think I'll let you go?”

Only one thing remained in his mind: to catch the ape.

『電氣』(Electricity) and 『堅牢』(Solid)

In a flash, a prison made up of electricity emerges from the feet of the ape, succeeding on catching it alive.

“Go on, try touching that electricity. After that a full course meal of a scorched monkey is finished”

Though it will also fry his glasses with it, he has forgotten that fact completely. But the monkey turned its body, and tried to strike the electric prison with the torque of its spinning tail.

Bachin!!

It happened again. The magic was repelled easily again.

“.....I see”

Hiiro sets his lips in a straight line, and writes another character.

『針』(Needle)

Aiming on the ground this time, he shoot cactus-like needles toward the monkey one after another.

(Can you avoid this much?)

There is something that made him convinced. And without a single bit of

hesitation at all, it jumped in the air.

“You avoided it, as expected. Then, how’s this!”

『大地』(earth) and『堅牢』(solid)

It changed from 『電氣』(Electricity) to 『大地』(Earth) this time.

The earth rises, engulfing the monkey in the air, capturing it. Then, the ape finally showed its impatience.

It goes back and forth the jail while raising a small cry.

“.....What happened? Why won’t you repel it just like what you’ve done a while ago?”

“Gigi!”

“It’s no use. Because you are.....”

When he was about to say the continuation, a fissure is made all of a sudden in the space near the ape. He maximized his instincts and took a stance. As he quietly watches out what’s going to happen next, coming out of nowhere.....

is AN RKO!!!! No... just kidding. Can’t help it. Sorry.

.....is a pure white snake.

Chapter 215 - Invitation from the Spirit

At that time when he caught that disgusting monkey thief with so much effort, a fissure opened on the ground all of a sudden, and from there a white snake had appeared.

(What the.....? First a monkey, then a snake?)

As he thought that there may be a zoo somewhere, the next scene surprised him more.

"Didn't I said it's fine already? Grandpa says to invite him politely, right?"

Not that I doubt my ears, but did that snake just talked? To the monkey? And also,

"Well, it's because teasing that fellow to bring him here is a lot more amusing ~"

.....the monkey talked.

Am I in a fairy tale somewhere? He thought by reflex, but here is a parallel world and there are also beastmen here, too. Though he assumed that is was that situation, it's still quite a shock seeing it for the first time.

"To you over there, I want to apologize for the idiocy committed by this one"

The snake moves its head to the bottom like a bow.

"i-idiocy....."

As the monkey was having a cramped face,

"Hey, you apologize too"

"Eeh~"

".....I'll tell grandpa, you know?"

"I'm sorry for the rude acts that I have caused"

The monkey straightens its own back and apologized magnificently. Is that grandpa-sama really scary?

“This fool says the same, too. How about, putting the pike here?”

He usually draws back on these kinds of things a long time ago. But even that, he's at his limit from grasping this strange situation.

“.....I knew it.....you are a 『Spirit』, aren't you?”

When he said so, the snake's eyes opened wide, as if saying ‘well done!’ then immediately narrowed it, staring as if it was observing him.

“Hee, as one would expect, to be able to distinguish Niña-sama just by appearance”

(TN Note: Okay, this is a bit confusing. The raw says it's ニンニアツホ(Ninniahho) but in the translation terminologies used by Anri-sama in dekinai translations goes with Niña instead. In this case, I'll follow Niña as it sounds more proper)

“.....huh?”

Words leaked out as if it's natural. It spoke with words that can't be ignored just now. Niña. It was the Fairy queen's name.

Before he set foot on the beastman continent, in the middle of the night, he saw fairies playing on the hill. At that time, he noticed their existence, and by a strange coincidence he reached the home of the fairies, the 【Fairy Garden】where he met Niña and did some silly talks for a while, too.

“Pardon my rudeness, but here is one thing I like to request of you. May I?”

“.....I decline”

“Aw, come on!”

The monkey grunted at Hiiro's refusal.

“Even if you take me to the strange realm of [fairies], I still have some business to attend to. Plus, dragging me into this place above all, who's not going to get irritated with that?”

He reluctantly cast 『還元』(Return) and the prison made out of earth returns to the soil.

“Kiki!?”

The monkey which was shaking wildly in impatience jumps on a gap opened in

the jail and lands in its feet.

Then, Hiiro goes in front of the monkey and reaches out his hand, telling it to give his glasses over. Though the monkey unwillingly hands it out while pouting, Bonk!

“Kii!? Wh-what the hell was that for!?”

Yes. When he received his glasses back, Hiiro dropped a fist into that small head of it immediately.

“To raise a hand on an innocent spirit, this is spirit abuse～!”

It put some distance from Hiiro while holding its head in pain.

“Shut your trap. My precious Fuwafuwa Fries is gone because of you, and for dragging me into this trouble.....be grateful that it ended with just that. Normally, I have burnt you into crisp by now.”

The monkey’s face paled as it heard his words. The snake on the other hand, throws a big sigh as it watches the spectacle of the two.

“Can we start now?”

With eyes that seem tired of this shit, he turned his gaze to the snake.

“To that fool over there, he will certainly receive punishment later, so can you hear my request?”

“Didn’t I tell you? I refuse. Don’t you get it you snake rascal?”

“Oh, rascal you say? Even though I look like this, I’m a woman you know”

“Spirits have gender? Interesting. What, you do like cross-pollinate or something to leave descendants behind, like in those books I read?”

“Ah, there’s a little mistake there. Even we spirits have gender, but it is only limited to high-ranking ones. Besides, for us, leaving descendants is optional”

The fact that they leave descendants is honestly astonishing. I didn’t think that all those written in the books are correct, but if it came to the person in question, then I might as well agree.

Besides, from what I have recently heard, then this snake is a high-ranking existence. I don’t know the monkey’s though.

"Ah, by the way, I'm a man!"

Though I didn't ask, it suits him apparently. But for two high-ranking spirits to come in such a place.....this might get troublesome once again.

"Well, your gender doesn't matter. Oy, white snake. Whatever you say, it's already time for my dinner. If you two tended to disturb my meal, off you go to my prison, got it?"

He pointed his forefingers of both hands as a threat, but the snake doesn't break her expression. Although the monkey backed by one step.

"Oh my, are you hungry? Perfect. I have arranged a reception at this place"

".....Reception?"

"Yes. As you have guessed, I want you to come to our home"

".....I knew it"

Because the vicinity is still vacant, perhaps he will be transported with the fairies just like that time.

"I don't know if this will be able to satisfy you, but for the time being, I have prepared a fairy service more or less"

".....service?"

That word tugged his heartstrings.

"Yes. However, there are such food exist only in the other side.....So, how is it?"

She smiled, implying him to try it. Though it's aggravating for him to act upon her will, there is the Spirit welcoming dishes he's worried about. He like to eat that by all means.

But if I followed them as it is, I'll worry Nikki and the others who are currently searching for me. It is very likely that this will become a big problem if I disappear as it is.

I don't know how long will I be on the other side, but what will happen if Nikki were to say to Demon Lord Eveam that Hiiro has disappeared.....?

".....I'll go"

"Is that so? Then at once....."

"On one condition"

".....and what will that be?"

"I have about two companions. Allow them to go together with me, then I'll follow"

"....."

Their eyes matched each other, and continued in that state for a while. But neither wants to yield. Realizing such situation, the snake spat out a large sigh.

".....Fine. Bring them"

Then, through Word magic, he guided Nikki and the others on his location. As they saw the talking animals, the two's eyes sparkled in fascination.

"Then, shall we? But please don't do anything strange.....well, in your case it will be an exemption"

A dark portal appeared in the air, and they entered as it is.

"Then, shall we go?"

The monkey pushes his back from behind. Though Hiyo doesn't feel any uneasiness because he had entered an identical space before, Nikki and Camus advance inch by inch, obviously feeling nervous.

But for a split second of passing through, the three people can only think of admiring the spectacle extended before their eyes.

It's a fantasy world.

Particles as brilliant as jewels dance like snow. A big rainbow forms in the sky, with a presence that let you yearn the illusion of walking on top of it.

The surroundings are full of forests, and leaves growing out in abundance in the trees have beautiful snow crystal-like shapes. As if it's natural for the three to be at loss for words in this magnificent spectacle.

"Welcome to our home, the [Spirit Forest]"

Chapter 216 - Spirit Forest

Through the guidance of the snake, they discovered a beautiful waterfront after passing through the forest. An altar-like structure was built at the center, with a big white lump visible on top.

(What is that.....?)

He stared, focusing his eyes but can't recognize anything from his distance.

"Follow me"

The snake says so, crawling on top of a lotus-like leaf floating on the water connected towards the altar.

"I-it won't sink, right?"

He understood Nikki's worries. It seems okay because the snake is lightweight in the first place, but she doesn't think that it can support a weight of a human person.

The monkey, realizing it in her expression,

"Don't worry. It won't sink"

But to Hiiro who is being excessively cautious, he tries to press his hand to the bottom. Certainly, it doesn't sink. Though a ripple spreads out because it is floating above the water, it felt like the top of a slightly soft soil.

Still, the three people advanced cautiously till they arrived at the altar. Then he was able to recognize the identity of the white lump clearly in his vision.

"Hohoho, we have waited for you, Omnipotent One"

(TN Note: 《万能の者》is in the raws. Can also be translated as all-around/all-purpose/utility/almighty person, according to jisho.org. I chose to that one because it's cooler)

It was an enormous white snake. With its massive body wound up in a coil, you can think of it as a lump from a distance.

"Whoa~ Soo big-desuzoo~"

“.....huge”

Nikki and Camus voiced out in reflex. It is really big, that's for sure. If it opens his mouth supposedly, it can fit up to three people all at the same time.

“You did god coming here. Are these your companions, Omnipotent One?”

“Yes they are, grandfather”

“Hohoho, I see, I see”

Though the corners of its mouth stretched in joy as it raised a laugh, it only resembled a snake finding his prey, gloating in itself. Nikki is really frightened, you know?

“Oi”

because he can't sit still forever,

“Lead me to the reception dishes quickly”

He quickly pointed his demand. As expected, the monkey and even the snake's jaws widely opened and froze in his speech and behavior. However, the huge snake only laughed about it.

“Hohoho, aren't you the impatient one. We have prepared it properly. Look over there”

When he focused his attention to a certain place, on the left side of the exit of the forest, a big table was prepared, with different kinds of dishes laid on top.

Then, without any foreboding the body of the white snake began to glow. Though the light was so intense it makes you grimace, it calmed down at once. However, as the light goes smaller, it gradually took a certain person's shape.

When the light disappeared completely, the huge snake in the altar earlier vanished, leaving only an old man full of white hair and a white beard in its place.

“I shall introduce myself first. I am called Hoozuki. Best regards from now on”

He smiled, rubbing his long beard. Though Nikki and Camus are blinking in surprise in the present situation, Hiiro who was quietly observing moved his eyes and asked.

“.....So? Are you the Spirit King?”

The person in question nods in response.

“Oh, very old indeed. Clearly different from the queen of the Fairies”

“Hohoho, even though it’s like hitting a whip on an old man’s body, I can still work out. Plus, the present [Fairy Queen] who is the same age as this princess here are still young”

“.....princess?”

“It’s me”

It was the small white snake that guided him here. But for Niña and this princess to be at the same age.....though you may not think of this in particular, if anything, it also has a kind of dignified presence the same as her.

Even though she looks like an ordinary small animal. Also, her tone sounds sassy.

“.....is there something you want to say?”

“.....who knows”

Does her intuition become sharper in her animal form? She glared in scorn, but he smoothly warded it aside.

“Rather than that, let’s skip the self-introduction and get on with the food already. The talk comes after that. Good?”

“Hohoho, it can’t be helped then”

On the table which was seen from the distance a while ago which he didn’t even notice till now, slime-like creatures of different colors appeared.

“What are they?”

“They are spirits too, you know?”

The princess pointed out, but

“These guys.....spirits?”

In every angle only slimes could be seen. Should it be called handmade slimes? It won’t be even strange if you came across them as giveaways of a crane game, as there are a lot of them, all in different colors.

"These children are lumps of power that nature produced, so to say they are "Newborn Spirits" which are not yet awake, ne"

"This princess, could you stop with that manner of speaking as if you're a companion?"

"Ya~i, he's mad at the princess yanno~"

The monkey who got scolded by Hoozuki and the princess who made an embarrassed face when rebuked felt interesting. But then the princess' eyes flashed in a moment,

"What? You want to pick a fight? You want to die?"

"Eh.....ah.....w-well.....no, nothing, please don't mind me....."

Just how weak is that monkey..... it's like a husband found having an affair and could say nothing at all.

"Now now, the two of you, make up. You're in front of our guest, you know?"

".....understood"

As he say so, she averts her eyes from the monkey, which then felt relieved to be able to escape in the situation.

"So.....Tenn?"

"Eh? What is it?"

Apparently, Tenn seems to be the monkey's name.

"I saw your impolite behavior to our guest in the altar, so you'll receive punishment for it later, get it?"

"Wha,wawawawawa!?"

Hoozuki smiled sweetly, in contrast to Tenn who turned pale and shiver in despair. Even though he looks like an old man, he's still a king after all. He's smiling, but you can feel the pressure through that smile. Tenn looks like he's about to pee in any moment.....nah, he's already fainted.

Seeming to be happy about it, the princess broke into a smirk. Weren't you close and supposed to help Tenn?

(Nay, it is said that you get along well if you quarrel often.....)

Then after everyone arrived at the table, Hoozuki began to speak.

“We wish to express our gratitude for coming to such place. Allow me, in behalf of all the spirits to give our thanks”

“Grandfather”

“Hm? What is it, princess?”

“You aren’t heard.....that”

“Oh?”

Before the eyes of the two, as if they aren’t interested in his speech, Hiiro was already staring hard at the dish in front of him.

“Oi, can I eat already?”

“Hohoho, then we’ll have a meal first, shall we?”

The moment they got permission, their eyes scanned the diversity of dishes placed on leaves serving as plates.

“oooh～ good smell nanodesuzoo～ ! ”

“.....looks tasty”

Unable to decide which to choose first, drools cover Camus and Nikki lips. Hiiro who was also the same catches sight in one plate.

There, was a meat with a bone shaped like those you see in mangas, but this one emits a rainbow color. Meat juices drip down as if it’s melting. Moreover, the meat juices shine in rainbow colors, too.

(TN Note: Will you poop or fart rainbows too? You know, when the meat has been processed in your body?)

“That is the Rainbow Meat. But I’ll say this first, it falls to the class of being a dessert”

Dessert? This is the first time a meat is classified as a dessert.

Though this Rainbow Meat is called meat, it is heard that it possesses the sweetness and acidity of a fruit. For the bone, truthfully speaking, it’s not a bone, but a hardened candy called White Honey.

Certainly, that would enter the class of being a dessert. However, since it

caught his eyes and was curious about the taste, he was seized by the impulse of want to try it first.

“I’ll take the Rainbow Meat desuzoo～”

“.....me too”

Are the two also curious about the taste? They ordered the same too.

Certainly, the texture isn’t like meat, if anything, it’s like a Castella. Then, for the first time, they noticed a sweet lump-like filling on the inside. The filling which is also of rainbow color oozed out and wrapped the Castella over.

(TN Note: Castella is a Japanese sponge cake)

“This is a confectionery, that’s for sure!”

He thought that the sweet syrup oozing out of the Castella is a confectionary, but the thick luscious sweetness, even to that degree, has carried the highest degree of elegance in it.

With this, they desired a hot tea. On the table, a teacup also made from leaves is placed, with a light brown liquid in it.

It has an aroma of a black tea. They took a sip, and because it is in the proper temperature not to scald themselves, it entered their throats quickly.

“.....Haa～”

They sighed in ecstasy. The taste is like tea, and can be classified as such from the Lemon Tea family. Its compatibility with the Rainbow Meat is too high.

“I can’t stand it anymore desuzoo～ ! ”

“munchmunchmunchmunch”

Nikki and Camus who have seemed to like it stuffed them in their mouths, savoring it in the way.

In addition, various service dishes of the spirits are tasted too. There should have been a considerable amount in the table, but all have disappeared in approximately 30 minutes.

“Th-that many dishes only in a flash.....what kinds of stomachs do these children have.....”

The princess who should have been calm and composed, can only be stunned by the scene before her eyes.

“Especially that glasses guy, to eat that much.....”

Looking at Hiiro who felt like he's in heaven with his swollen stomach, even Tenn is astonished.

“Hohoho, it seems it was worth it to prepare those dishes seeing your satisfied faces”

As expected of Hoozuki, he was only brought into a smile. Afterwards, after having received tea once again, Hoozuki who thought that the issue could be advanced finally begins to talk.

“Have you had your fill?”

“Yeah. I’m satisfied”

Upon telling his honest feelings, Hozkuhi returns with a nod. However, Hiiro squints his eyes for a moment,

“And? What business do you want in me?”

And decided to get down to the main subject. He didn’t think of this as simply a party just to let them have and enjoy their cooking as it is. Obviously, they have intentions. That’s what he thought, on order to return as soon as possible.

Chapter 217 - Haughty Snake

“Well then, how about showing your real form first and foremost?”

“.....”

That reminds me, I’ve completely forgotten that I had changed into one of the [Asura Tribe]. Nevertheless, as expected of the < All Seeing Race >, they truly are something.

Since no one will be able to trace them here, with Word Magic, he reverted back to his original form.

“Umu, showing your real face is the best after all. Aren’t you a charming one eh? How is it? Taking my little princess as a bride.....”

KAPU.....! (Snake bite)

“.....princess, that hurts you know?”

Though it is not surprising for the princess, but to be able to fully expand and bite a person’s head whole, you won’t expect that in that small build.

(TN Note: I suddenly remembered that video of a boa swallowing a dear. WHOLE.)

After getting bitten by the princess, bright red blood floods out like a waterfall on Hoozuki’s head.

“That’s because you said a strange thing!”

This has completely become horrific, so should you release him right away? He will soon die with the way he’s bleeding right now.

Then after the princess returned to her original size and plops on the table as it is,

“You understand, Jii-sama? If you say something unnecessary once again.....”

“O-okay, I get it! I get it already, so stop with that spooky glare!”

With a Humph! the princess turns her gaze here. Being surprised by the performance that grew in size that I can only do nothing but watch, our eyes

meet.

"Ah? Did you by any chance took it seriously? Sorry about that, I don't spare courtesy to those I haven't recognize yet"

It seems that she misunderstood it way far for some reason, and with that domineering attitude of hers giving him quite a sting, he retorted.

"Is that some sort of joke? Who in the right mind would lust in someone stuck up like you? Take a good look at the mirror then talk, reptile"

"Wa, whawhawhat reptile!?"

Needless to say the person in question, the princess became concerned with Hiyo's words, in which Hoozuki can only froze in shock.

"Ukikikikikikiki! Interesting~! A reptile he said! A reptile! A repBUHOo!?"

The monkey who was about to spit his sides from laughing was hit by the princess' tail and was blown away. Then, she glared at his indignant expression.

"Y-y-you here! Wh-who're you calling a reptile again!?"

"Who? It's you of course, you white snake"

"I am a Spirit! A high-ranking one even! A direct descendant of grandfather the Spirit King!"

"Oh really? Well, that's kinda disappointing for an heir isn't it, Spirit King?"

Hoozuki who was brought up in the talk can only smile wryly.

"Di-didididisappointing? Then, see for yourself!"

Smoke rises with the princess in the center, and a silhouette of a person was seen from there.

"Behold! My true form! See if you can say that word again!"

A beautiful girl of the same age as Hiyo stood with a blushed expression. Though because her eyes are glaring because of her temper, her white hair reflecting light certainly is beautiful, and had a style to the extent of making Lilyn envious.

(TN Note: Pssssh. Not a loli. Come back when you're ten. Then, speak with the prince of Lolis)

For some reason, she is wearing shrine maiden clothes. Nevertheless, her beautiful face is so well-matched the Japanese clothes that every man will no doubt be charmed with her.

“.....So, what?”

(TN Note: See, I told you he's only into lolis. Well, don't be too much of a loli though. Satou the God of Lolis will get you instead)

“.....Eh?”

Perhaps the princess is confident in her good looks. However, there are no distinctions for Hiiro whether the other party is a beautiful woman or not.

(TN Note: Yep, as long as it has these two. Food and Lolis. No common sense allowed. Wait, that's for the other novel)

She indeed belongs to the category of being a beauty, and including Camus who is here with Hiiro, the number of attractive ladies gathering around him is too much. It won't be an exaggeration to say that he's used to seeing beautiful girls.

(TN Note: Wait, don't rejoice yet. We haven't confirmed yet if the trap has been dismantled, so please exercise utmost caution)

Therefore not being stirred with admiration to the beautiful girl appearing before him made her confused.

“Uhm.....this is my real form, you know?”

“Yeah, I heard. So what?”

“.....for me who was regarded as cute and beautiful in the neighborhood to be called this way.....”

“It might be so. However, look”

He says so and pointed at Nikki and Camus.

“I can even say those words to these guys”

“Eh.....”

Yes. Camus and Nikki are certainly beautiful girls. Though Camus is a handsome man, you can also say that he has the looks that majority of women will surely envy.

(TN Note: Yes, he grouped Camus as a bishoujou)

“fufufu～ It’s kinda embarrassing, master～”

“.....n”

The two blushed and began fidgeting. I just said a fact and am not praising them, but.....

But the princess who cannot refute to Hiiro’s words can only stand firm.

“Ukyakyakyakyaka! Give it up, Princess! You are a snake but you look like a frog in the well who knows nothing of the great ocean right na-GYAAA!?”

The princess who was teased by the monkey grabbed a chair made from a tree and sent him flying once again.

“Haaa Haaa Haaa.....”

After observing Camus and Nikki with sharp eyes, her glance returned to Hiiro.

“.....in terms of chest, I win!”

She surely has a voluptuous chest, but.....

“Hey you, are you really that happy because you are more superior to these guys? One a kid, the other, a boy?”

“.....ha.....HaaA!?”

Of course, she’ll be surprised that Camus is a boy.

“Are you really one of the All Seeing Race? Then take a good look properly”

The princess takes a good look as he said, and stared at Camus so hard as if it pierces through..... then drops her shoulders in dejection.

“ugh.....why so pretty.....a.....a boy even.....”

(TN Note: It is an honor working with you gentlemen. It was nice knowing you all. *Activates the trap himself*)

“Well, it was good. After all, you have won in the size of your chest against a child and a boy”

He struck the finishing blow.

“Uu.....uu.....Kill, I’ll kill this man!”

“Quit it you fool!”

Hoozuki pinioned her from behind, restraining her movements. But she desperately moves her body, and

“Re-release me Grandfather! For goodness sake! Please let me murder this man!”

“I cant allow you to murder anyone!”

“It’s okay! I’ll only bite him and tear him up a little!”

“He will die from that! Calm down, princess! Try to remember well!”

“Remember what?”

“He has admitted that princess is beautiful!”

“.....eh?”

She stopped her movements suddenly, and turned her gaze to Hoozuki to verify. Thinking that finally the talks can be started, he spits a great sigh.

“Fuu, Didn’t he said it around that time you said you are regarded as a beauty in the neighborhood a while ago?”

“.....Eeh?”

“He said that “It might be so” way back. In other words, he admitted that princess is indeed beautiful. Aah, I’m tired”

The blood disappeared before everyone is aware, and a great deal of sweat is spouting from his forehead instead. He wiped it off after feeling relieved.

As the princess turned back, she moves her eyes to Hiiro, seeking the truth.

“.....am, am I really cute?”

She asks, feeling insecure.

“It would be so in the general public. If that look is plain, then a large majority of women will surely file a complaint”

Frankly speaking, the level of beauty of the princess is quite high. If we assume that such daughter is plain on the standard point of view, you’ll soon be

in questioning regarding your sense of beauty.

Then her face who looked down for a moment, after grooming herself, she put up and swing her long hair with one hand,

“I thought you’d say that!”

She said with an earth-shatteringly good smile on her face. She was already in an amazingly in a good mood as clear as anyone can see.

Because it is troublesome to offend her once again, they couldn’t say anything anymore and kept silent.

(Still, this one’s pride is really high, this spirit)

Come to think of it, I pass here a lot since I came here, but I noticed that we aren’t being introduced, and above being identified once, I was going to give my name back then, but I have thought that the other side already knew my name from the beginning.

Still, I’ll introduce myself with Camus and Nikki for now.

“So? Get to the point already”

“Then I shall be”

After Hoozuki clears his throat,

“The reason I invited Hiyo here, as a matter of fact, there are none”

If he really is she should have called him, but while he was eating delicious dishes, he said nothing at all.

“Really?”

.....is it already blown?

He put up his index finger.

“What kind of parallel world person that Niña cares about, I want to see it with my very own eyes”

“Only that?”

“Fumu, and also, please stand up for a moment”

When he stood up as he what he said, Hooziku approached him. He made full

efforts in observing his whole body. Nikki and Camus also, sensing the atmosphere, stood up in order to protect Hiiro.

"hohoho, you have excellent guards. But be relieved. I'm not here to do any harm. Look, would a host keep magic power from Niña before?"

"Magic power? Aah"

He remembered. When he went to the Fairy Garden for the first time, as a proof of trust he was given the Fairy Ring by Orun just as when he was leaving, and received a mass of magic power from the queen. Thought the mass of magic power was being sucked up by his chest at that time, because nothing happened, he had forgotten it already.

"Thus, in this way....."

When Hoozuki holds up his tight hand toward Hiiro, Hiiro's chest shines suddenly.

The warmth of the magical power spreads to his chest, then gradually leaves from his body. As the mass of magic power floats like big soap bubbles to the sky, he faced Hoozuki.

And as it is, the magic power was thrown to the waterfront. Turning his gaze after realizing what he had done, all of a sudden the water rose and took the shape of a door.

And as the door opens slowly,

PYU!

Something came out and flown towards his place.

"Waai! Parallel Worlder! A Parallel Worlder!"

It was the apparently the nagging fairy that he saw from before. Moreover, it is the clingy red haired one.

It rushed and flew around Hiiro round and round happily.

"It has been a while! It has been a while!"

With the same irritating tone as ever, he's amazed. However, it was explicable of what Hoozuki did. When he glanced towards the door above the water once

more, appeared a woman whom he had seen before.

“It has been a long time, Hiiro Okamura-san”

Niña, the Fairy Queen has made her appearance.

Chapter 218 - Reunion with the Fairy Queen

Transparent blue hair that reaches the ground. Hair that shines along the rays of the sun. And something that resembles a crown was placed on top.

The spreading several beautiful wings in the back which shine in a rainbow color, it would only be mistaken as jewels to those who see its glamour. Along with her slim figure, she's completely like a goddess emerging from a storybook.

It was certainly the Niña he had met before.

She was holding a staff in a hand, with a sphere-like attachment with feather-like articles that seem to be growing from the tip.

“Otherworlder! Otherworlder! Long time no see! Long time no see!”

As usual, the red haired fairy flying round and round atop of Hiiro’s head smiles full of joy.

“Orun, I understand your feelings after a long absence, but you’re in front of the Spirit King, you know?”

“Ah! Oh no! Oh no!”

Putting hands on the mouth after a cute ‘Ah!’ it flurried and went back towards Niña.

“Hohoho, what an energetic child”

“ufufu, too energetic that it’s worrisome”

“Not at all, being vigorous is the best. Umu, it’s been a long time, Niña”

“Likewise, I apologize for being able to meet only in such a form”

Seeing the figure of Niña bowing her head politely, it seems that Hoozuki is of a higher hierarchy.

“Hohoho, it can’t be helped. You are already a queen. Unlike the former times, you aren’t in a position where you can come and go as long as you want anymore”

Hoozuki said while feeling a little regret.

(It seems that they're acquaintances.....and are closer than I thought.....)

They aren't in a relationship between rulers of their races, but way more than that, from their interaction. Their relations are deep enough to make Niña come and go to the Spirit Forest in the old days at least.

"It has changed. It has been a long time, Hoozuki-sama. and also.....Princess"

But when Niña faced her, the princess seemed awkward for an instant, but she turned serious immediately,

"Yes. It has been a long time, Niña-sama"

"....."

"Grandfather, I have other businesses to attend to after this. Please excuse me"

"Princess!"

Princess ignores the words of Hoozuki and quickly ran away.

(What's with her? Being cold and distant all of a sudden.....)

With the princess' difference of attitude, he felt a strong sense of incongruity. Niña's face seemed to show sadness as well.

".....Sorry about that. Even though she has such an attitude, that girl means no harm....."

Niña smiles and shakes her head in disapproval.

I don't mind, because I also understand her feelings"

"Is that so....."

"But....."

"Hmm?"

"Geez.....did you summon Nia the same way like in the past, right?"

so you call her Nia before.....

Sensing the air going bad, Nikki and Camus looked at Hiiro as if begging for

help.

Meanwhile,

“Hey mother, hey mother”

Having changed the mood all of a sudden, the cheerfulness that doesn't match its size, Orun.

“What is it, Orun?”

“The otherworlder! The otherworlder!”

Thanks to her bright smile, Niña's face which was gloomy a while ago regained its former beauty.

“Fufufu, your right. Hoozuki-sama, Thank you very much for connecting the portal to reunite with him again”

“Hohoho, pay it no mind. Like the princess, you're already a granddaughter to me”

As she turned her gaze here, Niña gave a vibrant smile.

“I know that there are a lot of questions you like to ask, but it has been a while, Hiyo-san”

“.....I forgot”

“Eh?”

“Come to think of it, when you gave that lump of magic power to me, you said it. That it's something that will connect me to Fairy Garden. So it was such a thing”

Certainly, he had come in contact with the Spirit King this way.

“My apologies. In your case, I think that sooner or later you would be able to enter the Spirit Forest sometime soon, so I entrusted you my power”

“So the fact that I came here was to use me as a carrier.....you do realize that, right?”

Upon saying it with displeasure, she lowered her head in apology.

“I am truly sorry. But for me to come here again, this method was the most

certain. As for using Hiyo-san, I can only apologize with all my heart”

Then, he asked why it was necessary to do such thing.

A long time ago, Fairy Garden and Spirit Forest were in a distance where you can easily come and go. But on a certain day, a rift suddenly appeared and swallowed the two.

After everyone became aware, they were as if placed in an environment where when they reached a distance they cannot pass through, as if they're trapped.

“.....Environment? What kind of environment?”

Apparently, that thing caused a metastasis, but he was more interested in the ‘environment’ she mentioned.

“Hiyo-san, the Fairy Garden and the Spirit Forest, do you know where they were before?”

“.....where?”

“.....the bottom of the sea”

“.....Ha? The bottom of the sea.....?”

He received a strange answer in return. For the environment in question, inside a forest where one will get lost, he thought that it was hidden in an unknown desert, but for it to be the sea exceeded his expectations.

“.....but breathing here is possible, isn't it?”

Yes. He can breathe here normally. Therefore he could hardly think that this is in the sea.

“For that, each respective ruler.....myself here, and Niña there set up a magical barrier as protection”

“Is that so?”

“Yes. In that case, in the meantime, it's still safe even it has been separated from Fairy Garden, but as expected, coming here by normal means just takes too much time”

They would need a reasonable protection to withstand the ferocious demons

and the sea pressure after all. Whatever he say at the least, the place called the sea is beyond their imagination.

"Therefore in order for you to come here, you had no other way but to use me as a bridge, am I wrong.....?"

It was understandable. This method surely solves the problem if Hoozuki were to summon him here.

"However, something worries me"

"What?"

Directing his face to Hoozuki, he asked.

"For more than half a year, why did you not inform me? You could have summoned me earlier than this"

If so, then Niña should have been able to come earlier then.

"There are conditions"

"Conditions?"

"Yes. You, remember the time when you entered Fairy Garden"

As he said so, he recalled what happened that time. Traveling with Arnold and Muir, he was searching for an open place to practice his Word Magic, then noticed an object emitting strange lights on a slightly elevated hill.

That was Orun and the others. Then afterwards, for some reason a rift in space opened along them, and he was invited to enter the inside of it.

"To tell you the truth, to enter the sub-space, you need permission from a fairy or a spirit"

"Well, that's a given"

"However, that means you have to meet them in the first place"

".....? Isn't that obvious? You can't get permission if you can't talk to them from the start"

"I suppose, but discovering Fairy Garden which is a coincidence, along with your disposition to see the Spirits, it is all possible because you have met them"

"Hmmm.....now that you mention it.....no, wait. I met them?"

Certainly, he had come across Rarashik who was able to materialize Yukiouza aka Yuki-chan.

"You have met with Yuki, right? And for that, through that child, I have known your location for the first time"

According to his story, you cannot simply make that rift through space it seems. The limit is said to be only once in the first month.

"After hearing the story of Yuki, I was about to open the rift, but you have long gone that time"

As he didn't stay that long in the [Beast Kingdom•Pasion], the possibility of missing each other is huge.

"Yes, yes, I also went that time, but when I came, I can't find you anywhere"

The monkey that remained silent until now.....Tenn, shot a complaint. Even that, because he didn't know such a thing, it can't be helped for him.

"Due to that, he stayed on the land for a while, and if he came across you, I told him to make a contact immediately, thus finally meeting you today"

"Is that also from that snow rabbit?"

"Hohoho, not at all, Hey, don't go raising price of a footwear on a barefoot man here"

Hoozuki said, and turning his gaze on his feet, a dog is there before anyone is aware.....no, a ginger cat was quietly staring at his place.

".....what's with this cat?"

"You don't remember?"

".....Ah!?"

He was taken aback as the idea poofed in his head. If he remembered correctly, certainly he indeed met this Spirit before, or rather, fought neck to neck with it before.....

"D-don't tell me.....you're that lion?"

"Yes, it is I. The name is Shishi. That power of yours at that time, this one has

felt utmost admiration of it”

Though you may think of it as another person speaking an overly formal tone, but this thing called Shishi might be the same cat that Leowald had manifested.

Hiyo took distance and observed caution in reflex. Why? Because he had almost experienced being halfway to death with this thing once. Anticipating his reaction, Shishi began to talk.

“Please don’t mind what happened that time. The match was fought fair and square. This one does not hold grudges for it”

Saying it with straight eyes, it could be judged that he was saying the truth.

“(B-but for that one to be that stupidly large beast before.....)

Surprisingly, now it’s just nothing but a cute cat. It is not strange if someone were to rub its head and neck on impulse. Anyone dog or cat lover will surely find it irresistible.

“According to the story of Shishi, I heard that you’re in the Demon Country, so I made Tenn to go”

“I see. So that’s the reason you lure me into the forest and guide me all the way here”

“Yes, that’s right. Therefore, please forgive my mischief at that time. Of this cute and playful monkey, Mischief monkey for short!”

But as he was making a tee-hee without any bit of reflection at all,

“We’ll talk about that later.....Well then.....Tenn?”

A tremendous blood thirst was directed to Tenn, causing the small animal to tremble and shiver in fear again.

“Indeed, if it wasn’t for you, then we wouldn’t be able to summon him here today. But.....Tenn, you have a debt to pay to the Fairy Queen, is that clear?”

“Yes. Thank you very much”

He lowered his head in relief. Perhaps he thought the possibility of receiving punishment or something and was feeling uneasy about it.

“.....Hm? Wait a second, now that you mention it, that pervert..... I have met

another spirit too, you know?"

Hiiro's words gathered everyone's eyes.

Chapter 219 - The Spirits

Ooh~ It's been half a year! I thought that I could keep it updating it properly everyday but I'll still try my best in exerting myself from now on!

I want to do a popularity ranking sometime~

"Well, I said 'meet', but we've always been together....."

"Hm? Who?"

Correct. The spirit Hiiro's referring to is the perverted butler and his comrade, Silva Plutis, who's with him for more than half a year at least.

"I see, I thought so as I saw him from Shishi in the duel arena....."

He held a conflicted face for some reason.

(It seems that something happened between them)

I heard from Silva himself that he's a 'defective spirit'. I thought that he has an abnormality compared to a normal spirit, but it looks like there is still something more.

"Shishi, I'll ask once more. Is that really him?"

"It's him. I mean, we had been in highs and lows before"

To Shishi's words without a tinge of hesitation, Hoozuki utters a sigh.

"Can I call you Hiiro?"

"Do as you like"

"Okay. Hiiro, how far did he tell you about himself?"

"I hardly heard anything from him. Apart from that he was 'defective' one"

"Hmm. Well, do you want to know more, is what I'd like to tell you but..."

"Not really. I have no interest of forcing anyone his secrets. If ever, I only want to hear it directly from him"

Perhaps it is still unnecessary for him, he declined it for the time being.

"Is that so? I haven't heard anything from him for a very long time. To the extent that I was surprised to hear his existence from Shishi "

It seems that Silva have gone out of his hometown for a very long time that his existence died out here.

"Really? Then it's fine. I have no interest in the past of that guy. Even when that guy wants to talk about it, if I don't want to, I don't want to"

If he refuses it, he won't care.

".....I see, indeed. Well, if he happily spends his time right now, it may be okay"

Looking at somewhere distant, a tinge of slight regret was felt in his words. He didn't know what the relationship between Hoozuki and Silva has, but he felt an extraordinary bond from them.

(TN NOTE: Author-san, please, stop with the implications. Two old men is just.....)

"Well, if you describe it in a few words, then that guy and I are quite close friends....."

From the way he said 'best friend' not in the past tense, He and Silva are still close, or at least that's what he thinks. Though he doesn't know what Silva thinks of him, presuming the fact that they haven't get in touch with each other, he was able to judge that he's keeping a distance from Silva.

(TN NOTE: This. This is what I like from the KnW MC. His sharpness that could skewer adamantium)

"Well, I could say that that guy is fine. Having called me here and do these things, can we end this now?"

If his business with him is already finished, he wanted to return already, but,

"Eeh~!? Going home already? Going home already?"

He had completely forgotten that there is that noisy one.

As there was no reason for him to stay in the Spirit Forest any longer, Hiiro

wanted to return. But Orun, as well as Nikki and Camus too, who were strangely getting along well with the spirits made him troubled.

"Hiiro, can you stay a bit longer before going to the other side? I can't come here often, so why not enjoy the experience once in a while?"

A sigh of resignation leaked from Hoozuki's mouth. His idea could be guessed already. They are pleased with the rare guest who has the ability to see them, even bringing the Fairy Queen and the others here, they want to detain him even for a moment.

With the feast earlier, honestly he was contented for now. But because Camus and the others are glad with it, he didn't have a choice but to stay for a while.

"Besides, mainly because you have won against Shishi, I assume that you have known the truth behind Spirits, right?"

"That truth you're referring to is the notion that they can become a human form like you? That human-type Spirits' powers are an extraordinary?"

"Hohoho, how did you know? Did Silva told you?"

"Something along those lines"

"I see"

He stared at him as if he's deeply moved.

"It seems that Silva is quite fond of you after all"

He made a broad smile as he happily brushed his beard. Judging from the present exchanges, he knew that it's not the dark sentiments like hatred connecting the two.

"Because there are only a few number people who are able to manifest spirits into human forms, even with his diligence, that Beast King has still long ways to go"

"Hoozuki-sama, Leowald is a great man this one has recognized. This one believes that he can manifest the true form of this one in the near future"

Being a little offended by this, Hiiro wouldn't want to accept the words of

Hoozuki who criticized Leowald just as it is.

"Hohoho, excuse by for that. Believe me. In that Beast King, there still lies the connection of his spirit which flows back from the ancient times where their race can still use magic. Probably because of that, he was able to perform the manifestation"

Shishi nods in satisfaction.

"However, this is nothing new to the Beastmen. That bracelet is made really well"

".....bracelet? Is that by any chance the Nameless Bracelet?"

"That's right"

The tool they made in order to use the Binding Techniques. Because of that, every Beastman who couldn't normally use magic were able to go on toe-to-toe with the Evila directly.

"It is a great invention. The tool can awaken the powers of the Spirit sleeping in their own soul. The person who made it is truly a genius"

Though Yuhito doesn't have an atmosphere of a genius with that unkempt hair and that thick glasses of his, it seems that he is recognized by the Spirit King as such.

"May I ask something?"

Since it had become a matter of concern, Hiiro tried to ask.

"What is it?"

"The origins of the Beastmen are the Spirits, called Sacred Beasts, if I'm not mistaken. The bracelet is the tool that draws the Inner Spirit power within them to make a phenomenon, right?"

Hoho, quite knowledgeable are you"

Truthfully speaking, he only recalled what Rarashik had told him.

"You see, even without the bracelet, you can make a particular phenomenon with your Inner Spirit"

".....Well, that's a sound argument"

Originally, even without the bracelet's help, it is possible to draw out the

power that sleeps inside. The bracelet only plays the role of a booster, making the phenomenon manifest easier.

"As soon as the Inner Spirit consciousness in me awakened, the Spirit Forest gave birth to me as a Spirit in itself"

The Beastmen draw out power from the Spirit sleeping within themselves, and becomes a certain phenomenon. In other words, if he or she doesn't make a contract with the Spirit, it won't exist in the Spirit Forest from the very beginning.

For that the sleeping Inner Spirit of the Beastman turns to a phenomenon in itself and comes here to develop.

"Then, does that mean that up to now, the very Spirits are Beastmen's own power manifested in themselves?"

He wagered a theory. However, Hoozuki shakes his head.

"It's wrong actually. Some of them here are born naturally. Myself and the princess, and even Tenn over there"

It seems that high ranking ones with natural powers like Hoozuki can become a spirit too.

"But for Shishi, the Beast King made an Inner Spirit Phenomenon with that bracelet"

"It is. Leowald is this humble one's. And this humble one is Leowald's"

It means that the two are connected.

"Hm? Being connected or whatever, if you die, does the Beast King also die?"

"Not really. When I say connected, they are only a part of their souls. However, even if the Spirit disappears, it is born again over time"

"I see"

"However, for the Beastmen, it's different"

".....different in what?"

From I heard, if the Spirit in contract dies in an attack of the other party, it can be revived here over time.

However, if the Beastman who has manifested them dies, they cannot be revived for the second time. It leads to a complete death literally.

“And what is this ‘other party?’”

“I and Tenn are beings born from nature, so we don’t have anything that can hold us from this world. If we die, the power that keeps us from leaving is lost and we will completely disappear in this world”

“I see. Are fairies the same too?”

He asked Niña who was listening in silence nearby.

“Well, originally, Fairies don’t make contract with anyone. The concept of death is similar to humans. If we ran out of power, we die”

Apparently, the Feom to sum it up, are identical somewhat.

I see. If that’s the case, compared to a natural born spirit, isn’t contracted spirits somewhat more advantageous? As long as the contractor lives, you don’t have the worry of dying a couple of times”

Then, Hoozuki makes a complicated face.

“that one has a story quite difficult to tell”

“Why”

“Do you understand the reason why the Beastmen couldn’t make a contract with the other Spirits?”

“.....wait, so it’s possible to make the contract two-fold?”

Originally, a Spirit dwells inside a Beastman. Therefore even if you try making a contract with another Spirit, it repels them, making it impossible.

“But if we are referring to a Humas or an Evila, then it is a quite complicated story”

“Really?”

Certainly, if it is a being who originally does not have a Spirit inside him, he can be qualified as a potential contractor, but the problem is, to begin with, the Humas and the Evila don’t have the right vessel to contain the power.

The vessel was originally for their own soul alone. Because the Beastmen are an exception because they were originally Spirits and had retained its powers,

two souls cannot usually be contained in one vessel.

Even if you put them by force, the vessel won't be able to withstand the size, and the worst case is the fear of the spirits breaking down.

Moreover, at present the Humas and the Evila don't hold any kind of trust with the Feom. The contract is the power of trust. In this situation, making a contract would be beyond their dreams.

The Spirits' power is so great that it will surely become a great war potential as long as you can master it. For this reason the Feom at present cannot give their powers to the Humas and the Evila.

It is because they will surely use the power in the wrong way. War.....they can't hand their powers for such a barren dispute.

(Well, that thing is obvious. Especially, if the Human king were able to know this, he would certainly have abuse it for sure.....hm?)

Then, it became his matter of concern.

"Oi, Why is it that you're telling something that important to me?"

Hiro is a person who had participated in the war, and belonging to the race of the Humas too. After hearing such an important fact, is he not thinking that it may be exposed by someone?

However, Hoozuki put on a smirk for some reason. He felt something really bad about it.

"Hiro, you can use the Red Qi..... right?"

"Ah, Aaa....."

to the point that he can only frown in displeasure.

"How about making a contract with someone, Hiro?"

Chapter 220 - Conditions for a Spirit Contract

“Contract? What did you just say?”

Hiiro exclaimed to Hoozuki. Well, suddenly saying something like contracting a spirit really makes one be taken aback.

However, Hoozuki’s speech isn’t ended yet.

“Yes. A contract. With a Spirit. Here”

“.....What the heck? If I remember what you said a while ago, the vessel of an ordinary Humas and Evila is too small so contract is impossible, right?”

If they make a contract with a spirit, they will be crushed by its power and will be crippled for life.

“Certainly, if it’s a normal person then he may not be able to endure the load completely, and will meet a spiritual death. If we are talking to normal people that is”

“.....Explain it more”

“Still don’t get it? It’s really simple. While using Red Qi, you manipulate two different kinds of power. The Red Qi is originally for half-breeds..... In other words it is impossible to use if the person doesn’t contain the soul of the two races”

Hiiro knew this already. He acquired the information upon learning the “Four Word Chain” in his head.

“Mixing two different powers is very difficult.....even for me, using it normally is hard. Being a half-breed really has an advantage”

“I knew that. What I wanted to hear is, why are you suggesting to me, who is not a half-breed and is lacking a vessel for another soul, to make a contract?”

Hoozuki makes a long sigh while indirectly feeling his beard along.

“.....you who is originally a pure human being can handle Red Qi. That signifies that, you have the same disposition equal to a half-breed”

“.....Huh? Wait a minute. Then, a half-breed can also be able to make a contract with a spirit too?”

Hiro reached that conclusion based from the current story.

“Only if the host has no blood of the beastmen in their veins”

“.....I see. Because the person who has the blood of the beastmen has already a Spirit sleeping inside them, so it will be impossible for them to make a contract to another, right?”

“Right on. So it is possible if the person is a half-human and half-demon. Of course, it’s not like all of them can make a contract. They are only limited to those who have mastered Red Qi at the very least”

“I see. That’s a very interesting story you got there”

The half-breeds are being considered taboo and has been looked down till now because they weren’t granted Binding Techniques nor magic. An exactly different existence. And for this reason, they are despised.

But with this, the existence of half-breeds can now be seen in a new light. That is the Red Qi. So to say, if they were to have complete control of their power, then they’ll be promising.

Also, if they were able to master Red Qi to a certain degree, then they could make a Spirit Contract. If they were to make contract with a high-ranking spirit like Shishiraiga and Yukiouza, it is even possible for the half-breeds to obtain power and exceed other races.

(TN Note: It seems that Shishi’s full name is called Shishiraiga, as Yuki is Yukiouza. The previous translator Anri translated it as Shishi Liger but I’m keeping Shishi for the nickname as it is. This is open to suggestions)

(Well, there are merits and demerits in each of them, but this is really interesting. However, still, the face of the group of half-breed rejects will surely turn pale when they hear this story)

Hiro met such party while in the midst of travelling. He was made to hear that half-breeds are a poor and dirty race that are supposed to have nothing. Shamoe which is also their brethren was made to hear that such an experience has been done all too well in the past.

But in actuality, the half-breeds actually possessed power exclusively for them. Of course, it cannot be done if they don’t bring up their power, but still, it is a big difference for them who do not have anything to begin with.

“.....well, I’m good about the half-breed part. What I’m concerned is, whether I who isn’t even a half can really make a contract or not”

Because he hasn’t heard yet how it would turn out if he made a contract, Hiyo became uneasy.

“What, you don’t believe in the words of the Spirit King?”

“Can I really trust the words of the person whom I just met?”

Quit it with the sleep-talking is what he want to say. If someone believed the words of a person whom he just recently met, there is surely something wrong in his head.

“Hohoho, You are certainly right about that. Then, how about a test?”

After he said that, he left his place in a slow pace. Hiyo also stood up, and turned his gaze to Nikki and the others.

Don’t tell me, the one I’ll make a contract is you?”

“Hohoho, it would be much appreciated if I do”

“Why not?”

“The current me only has enough power left just to maintain the contract.....”

Hiyo could tell situation as he took a glance from Nina’s face tinged with loneliness, similar to what the old man is having right now. Sensing the deep circumstances involved, and because it didn’t matter to him, he changed the topic.

“So, assuming that I can make one, who will be the one that will make a contract with me? Surely, you aren’t talking about that noisy snake woman a while ago, right?”

Hiyo said in detest. He is thinking that he and the princess are somewhat incompatible, to the extent that they will surely quarrel when they come face to face.

“Hohoho. Well, as long as she likes it, then why not?”

“Give me a break”

“Feel relieved. Your partner is not the princess”

Hiyo felt relief hearing those words. If he were to make a contract with the princess, and be together with her for a long time, she will definitely scold him

more times than Lilyn.

“Who is it then?”

“It’s Tenn over here”

As he said so, he put his hand on the head of the preoccupied monkey. It seemed that my distance to Tenn lessened, not that I approached him myself.

“.....Eh, Eeeeh!? M-meee!?”

It seems that Tenn didn’t expect this, as he looks more surprised than me.

“You don’t like it? Didn’t you tell me something like wanting to go outside and grow stronger a long time ago?

Eh.....ah, well, I did say that but.....”

Seeing him catching glances at Hiiro, he seems to be evaluating him.

“Besides, this opportunity may not come again in the future. Will you take it or not?”

“uu.....”

“Furthermore, this is Hiiro who is recognized by the whole world as their shining light?”

“Uuu～”

“You even, didn’t you vaguely feel it?

“.....”

As I thought, being praised in this situation is too embarrassing for me. Still, I need to say this one.

“Oi, I haven’t said anything about agreeing to make a contract yet”

“Hmmm, you don’t like it?”

“no.rather than that tell me first what will happen if I made a contract”

Besides, I won’t be able to take it if I were to be fused with some monkey either.

“Oh yeah, right. Speaking of the contract, what first comes in your mind?

“Don’t turn the question back to me..... Fine. A contract.....With that, won’t you be able to gain the ability to handle the spirit like the Beast King?”

In other words, like <Binding Techniques>, you can now use the power of an

attribute, in addition to summoning the spirit in itself.

However, Hoozuki denies Hiyo's answer.

"Wrong. Actually, the meaning of the contract is different from that of Beastmen. Beastmen could already manifest their own power they have been endowed with right from the start. However, in this contract, it is necessary for the person playing the main role to present something which will act as a medium while making the contract"

"A medium?"

In other words, in order to change the position of Hiyo and Tenn, First Hiyo shows his things at hand, then it is stamped with blood as a sign of the contract with each other. Then the life force and the magic will begin to flow through the blood at the same time.

What they should be careful here, is that the flow of their power must completely be equal to each other. And the person who is playing the main role must mix the power in a good balance. Putting it simply, it's an enchantment. If it was enchanted successfully, the Spirit will be able to reside to the article and support the host with its power.

"I see. Then the contract will be established if I were to successfully enchant the powers through the medium well"

"Right on. And from that medium, it will be the linchpin that connects the Spirit to the contractor"

(TN Note: So you're basically saying that it's possible to make a wearable harem? Well, I personally have an armor fetish, so where can we start the negotiations with those spirits of yours (^_5^))

"and, what if I fail?"

"Hmmm~ well you'll just die if you're unlucky. Oh yeah, the medium will disappear too"

Don't say something terrible as if you only dropped a candy! It's death, you know! DEATH!

But if things go well, I'll be able to obtain the powers of a Spirit. Moreover, a high-ranking one is surely worth trying.

Considerable concentration is needed in order to combine the two powers. Hiiro is confident in using Red Qi, but can't utilize its utmost capabilities yet.

The contract must let someone whom you don't know share their own power through a contract. The difficulty is absurd as it is. Hiiro understood the reason well why others can't easily make a one.

"I forgot to ask, will anything be good as a medium?"

"Hmm? No way, right?"

"That is for the spirit to decide, but generally, it should be something that holds a great sentimental value to the host for the spirit to like"

"I see"

After that, Hiiro just remembered what matched his personal belongings for the time being.

"This sword!"

Everyone turned their eyes to the one who made that remark.

"Is there something wrong with the sword, Tenn?"

Hoozuki in behalf of everyone asks him in worry.

"No, what I mean is, if I were to make a contract with that person, then that sword is good for me!"

He seems to be pointing at Hiiro's Rending Blade·Zangeki.

"I can feel my will throbbing to be transmitted to that katana. If it's that blade, then you'll have no problems in terms of compatibility with me!"

"Hohou, it's just what Tenn said. How is it, Hiiro? Will you try it out?"

"Can you wait for a moment?"

Hiiro declared to Tenn and the others once again.

"What is it?"

"Aren't you lot forcing this to me?"

Tenn then asks something to Hoozuki, then he nods in affirmation.

"Of course. But whether the host's medium is suitable or not depends on your liking"

Tenn assented with a nod and stared at Hiiro.

"I'd like to go outside and run wildly whenever and wherever I want to. However, I don't like to be entrusted to this rascal for life either"

"....."

Hiiro stared back at Tenn, observing him. Seriousness is reflected in those eyes, without any signs of wavering.

"Well, what will you do?"

Strengthened his resolve, Tenn then declared to Hiiro.

"Prove it to me if you really deserve to be my master right here, right now and right away! So fight me, glasses bastard!"

His heart is finally prepared. He also understands his complaint too. Neither want to make a contract with a useless chap. If so, then the contract may be something that heavy for them.

Therefore, Hiiro didn't bite Tenn's taunt, and even Tenn didn't budge too, judging that something trivial like that won't prove anything but their worthlessness.

At first, Hiiro thought that they are forcing the contract with such a stupid-looking monkey, but he seemed to have piqued his interest unexpectedly.

Therefore the small image of him became big instantly, giving him a little surprise.

Obtaining the power of a Spirit is nothing but a rare chance. After the battle against that liger Shishi, with its composition made up of an 'Anti-Magic Element', he was looking for a countermeasure for it and found the Grand Red Aura, and if he were to obtain the power of a Spirit, then the possibility of mastering the Grand Red Aura to his body would be easier.

Because the Spirits play a great role in Red Qi, anyone can judge that this a large merit for him.

Even though it's a little surprising that his opponent is a little monkey, he's still undoubtedly a high-ranking spirit. Besides the fact that the Spirit King recognized his strength, he also said that he's qualified to be his partner. For

the head of the All-Seeing Race to act as his backer is truly an honor.

“.....interesting. I’ll tear you to pieces, you damn monkey!”

Sparks came flying on the stares of the man and the animal.

Feeling that their minds have set and cannot be stopped anymore, Hoozuki stated,

“Since you’ll be fighting, I’ll just set up a barrier here”

Hoozuki guided them to an open place. Over there, was the princess who has gone away earlier because she had some business to take, asking them the reason why they came. Upon Hoozuki telling her the reason, the princess breaks into a shock then turns with a ‘Hmph!’ to Hiyo.

“When humans make contract..... they die if they fail you know?”

“Shut up. I’ll do what I want”

With the fact that gaining the Spirits’ power will make him gain the ability to use the Grand Red Aura, Hiyo was invigorated.

Hoozuki then raises both of his hands to the sky, spreading magic power in a dome-like shape.

“You can do it without holding back here”

It was probably a type of magical barrier that restores anything broken inside it as it used to be. Truthfully speaking, Hiyo secretly wants Hoozuki’s magical barrier power more than the power of the Spirit.

At any way, he don’t have the intentions of losing this fight at all. Hiyo doesn’t know how strong the ape was, but he regarded him as an existence equal to Shishi.

But no matter what kind of opponent he will face, he has his all-purpose Word Magic as his weapon. Even if the opponent can use any kind of attack, as long as he doesn’t make a mistake, he will win.

Showing his combat mode made Hoozuki say in surprise.

“Ah, by the way, you won’t be able to use magic inside the barrier you know?”

.....Eh?

Chapter 221 - Hiiro Vs Tenn

(Hiiro's POV)

To be frank, I got impatient. Of course, it doesn't show in my face, but as expected, being made to fight versus a high-ranking spirit without magic really makes one uneasy.

His appearance is just like a small squirrel monkey, but the only difference is that his fur is yellow.

However, that thing is undoubtedly a spirit. Moreover, not an ordinary one, but a high-ranking existence like Shishiraiga which he had fought once.

Of course, not every high-ranking spirit is as strong as Shishiraiga, but still, if you see the place where the battle will be, then perhaps he has the confidence in his arms.

Having to fight in a field where the opponent cannot practice magic is honestly a severe penalty. Well, assuming that we'll make a contract, it won't change if the other party is stronger.

However how would I fight if he has the power on par with Shishiraiga? It would be a problem indeed.

(and it's a battle where I won't be able to use my Red Qi.....)

Yes. The Red Qi which is being utilized as the main combat technique for Grand Red Aura, which I had been saving as my trump card in unknown situations.

"Oioioi, what's wrong? Getting cold feet now?"

Remembering our first confrontation, I vexed at Tenn who is smiling like a fool to make fun of me.

Ha, no way. I'm just thinking of how I shall cook you right now"

I took him as an ingredient as a bluff, as I must not show my weakness to the opponent either.

"We wish you for the best master!"

“Un”

Nikki cheering and Camus nodding his head came to watch me.

“So, are you two both ready?”

Seeing his face, Hoozuki seems to be exited somehow. For his age, he's like a boy who can't calm down on a trip.

“Yeah yeah”

“This one is good anytime!”

After looking at the two who gave their replies, Hoozuki stepped back. Then, in one breath,

“Start!”

I instantly pulled out my Rending Blade・Zangeki. If it has come to this, then all I can do right now is to deprive the consciousness of the opponent with an attack enhanced by magic, or so I thought.

“.....So, you can bestow magic power to a sword eh?”

(TN Note: But WHY? IT'S STILL MAGIC YOU KNOW!)

As said by Tenn, a bluish-white magic envelops the sword. Or perhaps I should say, being able to release magic power saves me the trouble. Well, it doesn't seem possible to show the effect of magic to its max though.

I kicked the ground quickly, taking the initiative to close the distance for victory.

“Oops!”

“Haa!”

I knew that he'll make a quick evade, but that only shows how formidable an enemy he is. I can disturb the magic of the opponent if I were to cut him with the sword, and give him a little damage. Though it is enough for a weak opponent to faint, maybe for a high-ranking spirit, I could dull his movements at least. But still, I don't mind. If I focus my attacks to a single place, then he will surely knock him down as expected.

Are my movements predicted? He dodged it easily and kept at it. I too am moving quickly, but not even a graze passed through. Annoyed by this, I kicked

up a notch and tried to fling him up with a sword, but it's avoided pretty quickly. As expected.....this monkey's pretty nimble.

Moreover, the moment it was avoided, he twisted his tail and attacked. It doesn't seem to be a fatal one but for a spirit as an opponent, there might be a hidden ball at play in there. This time he aimed for a spot where I'm open, but I just rolled on the ground to evade it and exchanged attacks with my opponent again.

And then, Hiiro kicks the earth once again and swings the sword to Tenn, locking eyes at each other.

"Woah, he's fast!?"

The princess exclaimed in surprise. Thinking that such a duel is impossible to be performed this way, she became more surprised than before compared to when she was told of Hiiro contracting a spirit.

Up till now, of all the human beings that tried the contract ended in failure. Even if they temporarily succeed in the contract, their vessels of the souls weren't able to handle it and in the end, a lot of people had their spirit broken down.

I was told that Hiiro had already heard this story. Because of that I doubted his sanity for trying to carry out the contract without wavering at all. What's even more surprising, is the other fact that Tenn is chosen as the contract partner.

Only a fool can do this thing.....No, Tenn is already one, but still, he's a spirit who possesses power on par with mine. An ordinary man cannot even endure the power of that spirit, but fighting against him? It's nothing but suicide.

Certainly, Tenn was restricted by Hiiro's magic when they first met, but that was in the outside world, where a Spirit's powers are limited. We are now in the Spirit Forest, where a Spirit can use its full power.

Even a strong warrior like him cannot ever gain victory without magic. Though Tenn understands that, I cannot understand why you are still intending to try it.

No matter what he does, Tenn's victory is already decided. But my chest is full of feelings of wanting to ask about the meaning of the useless duel, but as I

watch the scene in front of my eyes, I became instinctively at loss for words.

As soon as he pulled the sword out, looking at Hiiro thrusting it at Tenn in such a ridiculous speed, I learned that he was not just a superficial big gun.

Furthermore, anticipating Tenn's movements and even more so, driving Tenn into defensive.

(I already know that he's not just an ordinary human being.....but still, I didn't expect this)

I checked it once again if my eyes are seeing things. Hiiro certainly qualifies the categories of strong fighters among the normal human beings.

Rather than calling it a raw strength, his strength, I can say is more keen on observing the enemy. In other words, it's insight.

"You sure are quite strong, Hiiro-san"

Speaking to herself all of a sudden, was Nina right beside me. I took a step back immediately, feeling rude, and put my head down.

".....It's kind of saddening, Princess. Can't we really get along like before anymore?"

"Our positions are different now"

Yes. Our positions are different now. I have no title, just a mere Spirit, while the other party is the queen of the Fairies.

But as I thought about it, it felt hot on both my cheeks all of a sudden,

"Hyaa! Whaf fu you fink you awe hooing?!"

I wanted to say 'what do you think you are doing!' But she pulled my cheeks so I wasn't able to.

"Hi, himyaaa?"

I called her name, but her expression turned angry,

"NO! Call me Nia!"

"Wu, vut....."

But even so, there is now way I can act overly friendly now that we have different standpoints. Even I too want to call her nickname just like before.

But there is a reason why I cannot do it anymore. Of course, there is the position, too. But the truth is.....I'm jealous of her.

We were born in this world at the same time, competed at the same time, and grew up at the same time. We are always together like true sisters, and were so close that there wasn't something we don't know about each other.

But when Niña was chosen as the Fairy Queen, there I learned the difference between our standpoints, and it created a hole in my chest. And a blazing fire fills in that hole. Then that fire gradually turned into something dark and cold. I noticed immediately that it was jealousy.

Together we aimed for the title of the Queen. I didn't promise to become a queen at the same time as her, but I had understood that it must have to be like that.

However, she became the Queen first. Thinking that I have been left out, I felt like I became a wee existence. But I know that she's not the kind of person to change her attitude with such a thing.

But I was forced to realize the difference in our status when we're together. Therefore I kept my distance, and for that I have become cold to her.

With that, I changed the way of addressing her, calling her Niña-sama instead of Nia.

Until I myself become the queen, and until I catch up to her.....

"M-my humble apologies.....but our positions are now different"

As I was released of my cheeks, I conveyed my feelings. Then after that, when she said "I see" with a sorrowful expression, I turned my eyes back to Hiyo once again.

While the princess apologizes in her heart, she turned her face to Hiyo once again, not aware of Nikki gazing at the two in wonder.

I clicked my tongue at quick successions at Tenn which moved quicker than he thought. He's moving around relentlessly, but is still not out of breath at this degree.

But, because the target is small, I wasn't able to catch him easily and am

getting more and more irritated by this.

(Fuu, it's useless. Settle down a little.....)

I took a deep breath and calmed my head down.

"Hey hey, what happened glasses rascal? You already tired at this degree? Ukiki!"

Blue veins popped in my forehead. It seems that my opponent is a pro at getting others irritated. You mustn't fall yourself into his trap, Hiiro!

"However, as expected that sword is good after all~. If I was being cut by it, it will surely be painful indeed ~ Kikii!"

He laughed as if he's totally playing around. Even if I confront him face to face, I can tell that he wasn't serious yet.

I think that magic can still be used, but it's meaningless if it isn't possible to use it forever. I have to think of a way to beat a guy with my own hands for now.

(My speed is still up. But the problem is the fact that this guy is not even serious yet)

The more I see his tail making a beckoning sign, the more I want to cut him into two exact halves.

(So this is what he meant with a High-ranking Spirit.....)

I look towards Hoozuki and Princess for an instant. They are human types now. In Hoozuki's case, his enormous white snake form shows dignity and power, if Silva's words were true, then there is still a hidden ball at play with Tenn.

(But still it's a standard tactic to set this out early as before he shows his true power.....)

I confirmed the surroundings for anything that I could use. I saw a tree standing, and something came in my mind. Because he hadn't shown his full strength yet, his trump card is still hidden. But if I were to make a mistake on the way of cutting it, it will all go down to waste. In short, after moving the opponent out-of-the-way.....

(.....well, here goes nothing)

I faced Tenn smirking as ever and gave him my war face. Of course, in order for the opponent to move in its place. I started moving.

I waved the sword, but he dodged it vividly and only cut the air.

“heheee～n! Miss me, miss me!”

I stared at him while he boasts proudly as he moves around and resumed the attacks. Because he jumped all the way to the left,

(Now's my chance!)

I hurled the sword at that place like a javelin.

“Whoa!?”

As expected, he didn't think that I will throw away my weapon and retreated to that place. Then I picked up a stone and attacked him in pursuit.

“A stone this time?!”

Although surprised, Tenn who has plenty of leeway jumped high to avoid it.

(.....excellent)

I made a confident expression, and this time moved from the place with all my power.

“Eh?”

Because Hiiro moved in a speed that he didn't do so far, Tenn was taken aback. Then, a big shadow attacks him from the rear.

“Eeh? A TREETREEEEIII!?”

A big tree has suddenly collapsed in front of him.

Hiiro wanted to just drive him to a place where he will be facing him with the big tree on his back. Then he went to its wooden back and cut it with a sword with all his strength. After that I tend it a little to the right. If so, then Tenn will probably.....

“Whoops!?”

In this way, he will surely jump out of the way to his left.

"Wha-whaat!?"

"You've been too careless, you yellow monkey!"

The probability of making the attack hit is And the plan is worked well, so after this the sword will be.....

Whoosh!

I cut him. I certainly had cut him, but the sword only made a whoosh.

".....What happened? Just now, that guy....."

I was astonished on how he was able to run away without being cut. And finally, looking at the person whose presence is now before his eyes, I raised my guard.

"Kiki, that was dangerous just now. If it wasn't for this form, then maybe I'd be separated into two right now. You're a good tactician, really"

He has a physique slightly smaller than Hiiro, and is hard to say if he's good-looking or not, but from there, was someone who looks like a charming but naughty boy.

Chapter 222 - Hiiro's Unique Searching Method

(Hiiro's POV)

With ruffled yellow hair tied in a red bandana. Eyes that leave a striking impression, a face which gives a friendly vibe caught my eyes.

But the thing that took his interest more is his condition.

“You, you can fly?”

That's what I like to hear from him, or so. I was sure I hit him at that time. I intended to catch him at the exact moment while he's still in the air.

But the instant the sword hit, that spirit's presence vanished from that place. He evaded instantly, as if he was using some kind of booster.

Therefore I came with the opinion that he can move to the sky freely.

“Nope, I can't do those things you know?”

“.....”

“I merely jumped out to begin with”

“.....jumped?”

“Really. I just felt like it”

He made a big jump in the sky as he said so. I traced him with my eyes, not getting him away from my sights. As he was about to reach the ground,

BOFU!

Then, Tenn's feet shine faintly, and jumped again to the sky from that place. Everytime he is about to fall he moves his feet in the air many times, and rises to the air again.

“That's too convenient!”

I see. This is why he was able to move at that timing. This guy can't fly in the sky. Instead he can jump in the air. It's just as he said.

“.....is that some kind of magical enchantment being stored on your feet, then discharged instantaneously.....? Or, conjuring a small explosion of magical power.....?”

I unintentionally let out my bad habit of analyzing an unknown entity. Looking at Hiiro, who has his hand supporting his chin, Tenn tilts his neck and went down the ground.

“O～ii, can we continue?”

Tenn’s words brought me back to my senses. Then pointing my sword to the opponent for the second time, I took a stance once again.

“I see. This is getting more of a pain in the ass than I thought”

Another opening has vanished in my opponent. On the other hand, I can’t even use magic here. Though there are some countermeasures, their effects are all weak.

Moreover, I can’t grasp the ability of my opponent that has taken that form. If I were to put it, it’s very different from when he was still a monkey..... or rather, an overwhelming difference of power is gushing out in my opponent right now. He’s like an absurd existence.

Though he’s not giving his full power yet, I can already feel the pressure way above the one I felt when I was battling with Shishiraiga.

While thinking how to catch him off-guard, Tenn disappeared in my scope.

“!?”

Being taken aback, I felt hostility from behind, and crouched down in an instant. The sound of something cutting the air ran above my head, and feeling a bad premonition I escaped from the spot immediately.

“I missed～, but that was only a greeting so you can avoid it easily”

Though his face sticking out his tongue annoys the hell out of me, there is no time for me to be angry right now. That was a tremendous movement. It’s a simple movement but I couldn’t even see a thing, and made me completely taken by surprise. Though I was able to avoid it because I felt the bloodlust, my whole body became cold, as if dousing cold water to a hot body.

(Furthermore he was not in full power yet..... that movement, added to this Magic Nullifying Existence..... you've got to be kidding me)

I thought Shishiraiga was fast enough, but this Tenn was even faster. Of course, I didn't fall behind in my Peerless Mode back then, but sticking with nothing but my physical strength, frankly speaking, I can only barely catch up.

(is this the difference of the human model?)

It is incomparable from the time he was a monkey. Every movement, every attack of him makes my spine shiver. I have to make a breakthrough in one way or other or I'll be dead.

"hey"

Though calling him out of the blue made him raise his guard, his wariness subsided when he saw his opponent with his hands behind his head, smiling with a loose face.

"You can manage Red Qi, can you? But from what I see, you can't seem to use it well"

".....who knows? Are you provoking me to let my guard down?"

"Hmmm~ so you can do it to an extent, from what I can sense of you~"

He has seen through me. Having suddenly remembered, I put an unpleasant expression in my face. That reminds me, my opponent right now is an All-Seeing-Race. With this, there are no more cards available for me anymore.

"Hmmmm~Oh well. If you can master Red Qi then you might be able to match me, but this is fine for now"

".....Wha?"

I asked him again of his conclusion earlier.

"Hmm~ You see, I didn't expect that you will drive me to use this form. And as there is no point in competing with you in this either....."

As Tenn said so, his body blurs slightly. I focused my eyes hard, but in an instant,

HYUNHYUNHYUNHYUNHYUN!

A series of Tenns filled up the surroundings and multiplied one after the other. I watched my surroundings while maintaining caution, but their numbers became too many to count.

“I can see through you, glasses bastard”

“What did you say?”

I said it in order to probe him but he doesn’t seem to budge either.

“There is only one original body. Try to win this. But you have only one attack available. Can you do it? Show me what you’ve got”

I observed without moving from my place. However, I can’t tell the difference between the genuine article and the imitation.

“oioi, you are thinking that there are fakes in them, am I right? Wrong, wrong. All of them are real at the very least”

“.....!?”

“All of them.....are real!?”

With that power out of the standards, I almost yelled it out. Just thinking when they all attack makes me shiver. I may knock down several copies, but defeating all of them is indeed impossible in this situation.

“The one I’m talking about is the original body, in other words, the original! By the way, we won’t move from here, so get on with it already! Oh, I don’t have the intentions to do it long so..... you only have ten minutes!”

He said so, with an irritating smile resembling his monkey form a while ago. Even those who are in the air became stationary, as if they are floating, completely stopped in the air. Well, I don’t have the time to wonder about such things.

(the original body.....where is it?)

I cannot tell the difference at all. I can only attack once. If I miss, Tenn won’t recognize me. Even if that monkey won’t accept me, I don’t mind it at all, but I’ll end up being made fun of.

If Lilyn were to find this out, she’ll make a fool of me certainly.

I put up strength in my clenched hand and looked around once again.

(Fine.....I'll make sure to win this game by all means)

While it's good to aim to win by all means, I can't think of a great plan with this time passing.

"Ora ora, what's the matter now~"

A monkey bastard lands in the vicinity, but there's also some in the air as well as on the ground, so it's truly irritating.

I can attack only once. Finding just one person from the midst of the enormous crowd is very difficult.

Even if I move and check them one by one won't get me anywhere. His face shows a smile of sense of superiority, but I calmed my mind and observed all of the Tenna.

However, I can't see the difference between all of them.....

(What a difficult ordeal you have given me.....)

Even if I strain my eyes to death, I can't notice a single thing.

"Eight minutes left~"

Time passes by at every moment. If this continues, then distinguishing the original one from the rest won't be possible. Though I can easily do it if I were to use magic, after coming here, I can't do but only praise the value of the magic I've taken for granted.

Even if I move around and verified each of the Tenna, I won't be able to judge their differences.

"Six minutes left~"

It gradually took my patience. I made my eyes look sharper on their every movement, but still there is no use.

(3rd Person POV)

"Master! Don't give up desuzoo~ ! "

"Nn.....Hiro can do it"

Nikki and Camus' cheers reaches towards my back. But no matter how much they cheer, the time just passes by because he couldn't do anything.

"Ara, if you can't handle such trial satisfactorily, then you won't be able to make a contract with a spirit even more"

A voice filled with thorns stung my back. Moving my sight, it was the princess that was being teased a while ago, sneering at me.

"Niña-sama, though grandfather somewhat favors him for some reason, I think you're overestimating him too much"

"Four minutes~"

In addition to the cheeky remarks of the princess, Tenn overlaps it with his countdown while pulling a grin. If I were to explode here, I'll end up being treated as the immature one. So even though it's irritating, I gave priority to the challenge that I must do for now.

"Mumumu! Princess underestimates master way too much desuzoo!"

"Eh? Wh-what?"

Nikki shouting all of a sudden made the princess exclaim in surprise.

"Hiiro.....not a fool"

Camus too, retorts, causing her to show a state of confusion.

"Bu-but this is as you can see! With this little time, how will he find a way to break through in this situation?"

It is what as she said. Therefore I can't talk back.

Muu~ Still, master will do something about it!"

"He can.....Hiiro's that person"

"Uu....."

The princess steps back in defeat to the pressure emitted by the two.

"N-no matter what you say, his situation is quite severe. This is a trial to make a contract with a Spirit, you know? Even though he's a person from a different world, what's impossible is impossible"

With puffed-up cheeks, the two people opposed her, but instead of hearing the words of the princess, Hiiro focused his consciousness on the other matter.

(.....Trial to make a contract with a spirit...huh. A spirit.....)

Hiiro repeated the princess' words in his mind, put the sword gently and stood still.

"Hou" Hoozuki who is watching Hiiro's state suddenly exclaimed as if saying "well done!"

"Princess"

"What?"

Hoozuki calling her suddenly made her ask in reflex.

"Haven't I always told you?"

".....Eh?"

"As long as you don't give up, you will definitely see the light"

The princess kept silent to those words, and pouts in displeasure. But that expression immediately broke when she saw Hiiro with a serious face. As for the reason, it is because an unbelievable amount of magical power oozes out of him.

"Whawhat's with this magic power.....!"

The amount of Magic power their thoughts is being released by Hiiro's body, covering the entire barrier.

"Hohoho, It seems that he's harboring a power even beyond our imaginations"

The amount of magic power is so surprising that they all unintentionally gulped. And because the magic power passed though and surrounded the whole barrier, it is outside its influence... can Tenn be able to withstand this magical pressure?

"How far will he keep on growing?"

Niña beside them uttered a cry in surprise. Hiiro's growth rate became an existence immeasurable for them.

"Y-yeah, surely his magic power is enormous, but how will he distinguish the original body with this.....Ah!?"

"So you have noticed too, princess"

Then she was able to understand clearly why Hoozuki expects much from this man.

"Eeeh, but this is too reckless!"

"Hohoho, what an interesting lad"

Traces of despise can no longer be felt from the princess' eyes. Keeping silent, she only focused her attention on what will be the outcome of Hiyo's action with her very own eyes.

(Tenn's POV)

"Uu, what an incredible magic power!"

Tenn who was in the middle of the maelstrom was caught and was suffocating in the midst of pure magical power gushing out like a fountain.

(No way, this amount magic power even surpassed the Spirits!)

In terms of magic power capacity, Spirits won't lose compared to other races. Rather, for them whose entire existence is made up of magic power itself, this is not an exaggeration. As it is their predominant point, they took pride in their enormous amount of magic power.....but in the end, this man emitting such a great amount of magic power exceeded our expectations

(Moreover, the great amount of magic power is breaking away my Mind Control. This is bad~)

(TN NOTE: Mind control is 心許(こころもと) in raws. Not sure if this is correct)

While thinking this, I turned my eyes on the perpetrator discharging his magic power. No matter how much magic power being released, it doesn't matter if you are unable to control it perfectly.

But from what I see, he is not only releasing magic power, but also investigating each of the bodies by wrapping them of this.

No matter how much you divide and separate the distribution of magic power, the core which produces magic will always reside in the original body.

But because this magic power which enveloped the bodies is analyzing them carefully, the original body will be found in no time. The “core” that produces magic. The thing that forms the spirit’s soul.

That is what the clones are lacking. Hiiro who became aware of that is examining the bodies by freely operating his magic as it is.

However, to do this, one must have precise control of their magic power, and if he keeps on releasing this great amount, it won’t be strange if he depletes his reserves early.

Though his thinking is quite correct, his method is too reckless.

(If this continues I’m going to lose big time!)

Though he didn’t intend to move normally and inspect them as what I expected, I declared to him that I won’t move from the spot.

His magic power hasn’t spread in all the members yet. It hasn’t even reached the original one either. Will he be able to maintain this release of magic power, or will it run out midway?

(Hehe, this is exciting! Let’s see how this one will come out!)

(Hiiro’s POV)

This gamble is quite rigged with disadvantages. But I have no other ideas. If I have a little more time, maybe I have thought of something better, but I can’t risk anymore, so I decided with this.

A trial to make a contract with a spirit.....with that princess’ words, I remembered what kind of existence the spirits were.

The spirits are magic in itself. Its existence is magic power in itself. It is not an exaggeration to say that their body is made up of enormous amount of magic power.

And I also remembered that the spirits have a “core” that serves as the nucleus, or the source of their magic powers themselves. It is their unique part, and even if they split themselves like this, only one will exist, and that’s in the original body.

I’m still unsure of this. But this is only what I can think of. Therefore I thought,

how am I going to look for the core? And came up with covering the entire barrier with my magic power to be able to check them all.

Magic reacts to magic. Therefore if I release magic power in my body, I judge that it will make a reaction to the “core” of my opponent.

Though this aggressive action makes the heartbeat of the opponent shot up, because it doesn't make the other party any harm to be considered an attack, I feel relieved in doing this at least.

But this is the first time I did this, so it's quite hard. Though I have released magic power many times, this one is a complex process of discharging magic in a big surge at once, maintaining it, and then concentrating in manipulating it to examine each magic entity.

And my feeling of exhaustion accelerates from that, to the point that I'll fall down if I let my guard down a little. It was thanks to the large amount of magic power I have that I was able to make it till this point.

(But is this my limit? It's too slow! I haven't spread it in the entire whole yet!"

I grit my teeth while sweating like a waterfall. I feel like the weight of my body is gradually getting heavier and heavier as times pass.

I couldn't hear Tenn's countdown anymore. Perhaps because he was fretting in this tactic, too. For that, I'm determined that I'll surely win with this.

However, I lost my strength in my knees. No, not yet. If I fall here, I won't be able to stand up anymore. Then it will be over.

(As if something like this.....will hold me back!)

I took a deep breath, then

“UOoooooooo!”

I squeezed out my remaining magic power in a burst. Then.....

(.....found you!)

I opened my eyes in a glare, then approached the target I heavy steps. The opponent's face gradually enters my view, with a face not grinning anymore like from earlier.

I put power my trembling fist and swung it as hard as I can.

SMACK.....

A weak sound strikes the opponent's cheek. There is hardly no damage, in reverse to their expectations. However, the attack is successful. But as for the target is the real one or not.....

The moment I try to confirm it, my both legs have lost its strength. Still, I didn't separate my sight from the person in front.

".....you're quite something, human"

The other party's mouth moved so, and my consciousness drifted to the darkness with a smile.

Author's notes:

This time it's only Two characters.

It was sudden, but I decided that I'll first count the total votes of the most popular character by the large number of requests.

For the time being, I'll announce the first place in overall characters, and the first place in the most favorite heroine below.

But this is only because i have time to spare, so only vote once, please!

How to vote

Overall character - Okamura Hiiro

Heroine - Muir

Any format is good as long as it's understandable, if I can have a message with your impressions, I'll add it up here!

I'll ask a friend personally, and when I felt that I finished hearing everything, I will announce the result! How about a week later~

As for the characters that came out so far:

Okamura Hiiro (The unique cheat of a main character)

Muir (First heroine, with a little yandere disposition)

Arnold (Lolicon Old Man)

Lilyn (Tsundere Loli Noble girl)

Silva (ubiquitous and elusive hentai butler)

Shamoe (Clumsy maid who always panics)

Nikki (The stupid and cute pupil of Hiiro)

Mikadzuchi (former demon who's fond of Hiiro)

Aoyama Daishi (Ikemen Harem Creator Hero)

Suzumiya Chika (Tsundere sporty queen)

Minamoto Shuri (Yamato Nadeshiko Type)

Akamori Shinobu (Cheerful girl with a Kansai accent)

Rudolf (Foolish King of the Human Country)

Lilith (The first princess of the Human Country)

Maris (Queen of the Human Country)

Well Kimble (Commanding officer of the Human Country)

Dennis (Minister of the Human Country)

Maricris Bluenote (The fortunetelling hag who taught magic to Hiiro. Real name is Alicia)

Nisu (The child in the village Hiiro visited for the first time)

Brey (father of Nisu, Village mayor)

Panisu (The old weapons dealer which gave Tsuranuki [Piercer] to Hiiro)

Mick (The old man in the general goods store who was knocked off his feet by the robber)

Tsungari (One of the Harios Brothers who was cut down by Hiiro)

Tsuru Debu (One of the Harios Brothers who was hit by Heat Word Magic of Hiiro)

Eveam (Present Demon Lord whose head is a flower garden)

Aquinas (Cruel Rank One. Strongest Demon)

Marione (Cruel Rank Two. Moustache Baron)

Tekkil (Cruel Rank Three. The Masquerading spy)

Ornorth (Cruel Rank Four. Werewolf who is lacking in literary talent)

Shublarz (Cruel Rank Fifth. Voluptuous Beauty)

Greyald (Cruel Rank Six, Nimble guy who always finds most things troublesome)

Kiria 05 (Former aide of Eveam)

Kiria 03 (Battle specialized model. Slightly stupid)

Kiria 02 (The super wicked tongue type)

Musun (Master chef of the Demon Country)

Rushbelle (Head Commander of the Demon Corps, let to the nose by Yuhito)

Havreed (Slender Captain of the Demon Army)

Eunice (Captain of the Demon Army who is formerly blindfolded and looks good in China Dress)

Judom Lankars (Reliable Guild Master)

Max (The Bearman friend of Arnold and as fat as a pig)

Leowald (Present Beast King, Battle Maniac)

Regulus (Wise first Prince of the Beast Country)

Lenion (Impertinent Second Prince of the Beast Country)

Kuclear (The first Princess of the Beast Country and somehow attracted to Hiiro?)

Mimir (Second Princess of the Beast Country, Hiiro nicknamed as Blue Ribbon and also likes Hiiro)

Blansa (Beast Country's Queen)

Barid (One of the Three Beast Warriors, Birdman)

Crouch (One of the Three Beast Warriors, nicknamed Nyan-girl. A girl pained by the urge to make Hiiro hers)

Putis (One of the Three Beast Warriors, enigmatic costume-wearing girl)

Rarashik (Combat Genius who invented the Binding Techniques, a Drinking Loli-baba and nicknamed Chibi-usagi)

Raiv (Arnold's elder sister, Head Maid and Cigarette Lover)

Yuhito (Rarashik's Research Maniac Elder Brother)

Niniaho (Fairy Queen)

Orun (Noisy Red-haired Sprite)

Camus (Young chief of the Asura Tribe and faithful subordinate of Hiiro. His girl power is stronger than anyone)

Jinu (Camus' assistant, nicknamed topknot guy by Hiiro)

Shivan (Old friend of Lilyn and Camus' grandfather)

Rigund (Father of Camus, transformed into a demon causing his death)

Potnis (Head Priest of the Ordine Main Temple)

Avoros (Previous Demon Lord and elder brother of Eveam, a beautiful shota)

Iraora (Former Cruel who killed Greyal)

Hiyomi (Avoros' companion who harmed Camus' father)

Kainavi (Tried to kill Hiiro, but is counterattacked by Lilyn and Camus)

Kokurou (Beastman with a dreadful past)

Hoozuki (Spirit King and a huge white snake)

Hime (Spirit, a tsundere miko girl. Normally a small white snake)

Tenn (Spirit, a naughty monkey rascal)

Yukiouza (Spirit of Rarashik with the form of a snow rabbit)

Shishiraiga (Spirit of Leowald with the form of a lion. Normally a small ginger cat.)

So have you picked already? Perhaps, there's too many, but what do you feel is the best character? Please only choose one overall best character and best heroine per person!!!

Chapter 223 - Obstinate Snake Princess

When Hiiro is about to fall, Tenn supported him with his right hand, the barrier has been dispelled, and Nikki and Camus came from their rear with an incredible momentum.

“Ma-Masterr!”

Tenn who leaked a light sigh laid down Hiiro in that place, and Nikki whose face looks mortified directs her gaze to Tenn in vexation.

“Don’t worry. It’s his win”

“.....Eh”

Then, the Tens disappeared one by one, leaving only one in front of Nikki right now.

“That guy did searched for me splendidly, therefore.....”

“Hiiro.....won?”

With a deadpan expression, Camus spoke to Tenn which was then answered with a nod,

“Yeah, congratulations”

“Uoooo! Thank goodness desuzoo!”

Nikki clung to Hiiro who was lying down. Then Hoozuki comes over.

“Hohoho, to surpass a trial by that kind of method, really”

Despite his disheveled face, Hoozuki smiled in bliss, while the princess seemingly annoyed by this faced Hiiro.

(What’s with this kid? For him to break through the trial by that method, it’s too reckless!)

With feelings unable to understand at all, she observed Hiiro who splendidly passed the trial.

“Hmm, he has the backbone, he has the ability too, and above all, he is well liked by the Spirits. Hmm, I knew it, he’s perfect for the princess as a bride.....”

.....crack

“Grandfather.....aren’t you getting a little too far?”

“Ii-it’s only a joke, princess..... so please don’t release your bloodlust to me...”

The princess went to Hoozuki’s back before everyone is aware, with her sharp fingernail slightly touching his neck. Hoozuki turned pale while letting out cold sweat from his entire body.

“These two, what are you doing.....”

Tenn shrugs his shoulders in amazement, then releasing a white smoke, turning back again into a monkey.

“Kikii, I found an interesting fellow!”

He put up the both ends of his mouth to a smirk while looking at Hiyo’s face. Seeing Tenn’s joyful smile, for some reason a painful feeling passes through the princess’ chest.

Seeing the princess’ facial expression,

“So, princess, what about him? Forming a contract that is.....”

But the princess surprisingly makes a big step back.

“Whawhat are you talking about, Grandfather! I-I don’t have any intentions of making a contract throughout my entire life! A worthless creature of a human even more!”

“Hmm, is that so?”

“O-of course. Th-though I admit that I recognize this kid’s perseverance even a little.....he’s still a human after all, although it’s unbelievable, and isn’t that already decided he’s going to be Tenn’s contractor?”

Though she kept on fast-talking her excuses, Hoozuki’s grinning didn’t stop.

“It’s only a joke. The candidate for the contract will surely be this child. However, the contract is all about compatibility too. So if Tenn is no use, then how about you, princess? Well, if that recoil won’t affect his body when he fail that is”

Certainly, when failing a contract, the risk is high. Though Tenn consented in making the contract for the time being, it doesn’t mean that the contract itself

will succeed. The worst case is he may die if it fail.

"You're saying that for your own convenience! I am not an alternative!"

"But, your face earlier shows like you envy Tenn, is it not?"

Then, the princess' cheeks reddened, and turned her face away for it not to be seen by anyone.

"I-I-I-I haven't done such a thing! Really, how rude!"

"Hohoho, is that so? Well then....."

Hoozuki slowly turned his glance to Hiiro.

"Certainly he's not destined to be the one to make a contract with the princess. I think that Tenn fits him better"

"....."

Hearing the words of Hoozuki in the back, even though she thought that it's the proper thing, there is still some prickling sensation in her chest. That's from Tenn's joyful expression from a while ago.

In actuality, because the spirits comprise of a single substance, there are no troubles in their living. But their power is restricted considerably in the outside world, so they can't stay outside for a long period of time. That's a common knowledge between spirits.

However, if there is a contractor, it is possible to share their existence together, and because they act together, they can move however they want in the outside world.

Above all, if contracted, the spirit could now show their true powers on the world outside, and moreover the magic power supplied from the contracting party gives off a sweet pleasant sensation.

Of course, the princess hasn't been in a contract yet, and because of that, she doesn't know what that sensation is. But according to the other spirits who have contractors, she heard that they were able to taste a similar feeling of ecstasy.

But they say that the sensation of the connection which is being trusted by the contractor is the best. Being together, leads to the happiness of the spirit.

Therefore the natural-born spirits are always longing for a contracting party to appear.

Every one of them desires to feel such sensation. But it is extremely rare for a contracting party to appear. Rather, it can be said that such chances were lost after the Spirit Forest was transferred to the bottom of the sea.

In the past it was an abundant and beautiful forest, and the people who got lost and encounter them were the ones who were able to make contracts with them. But that's impossible now. That's because there can't be a person who would lose himself in the bottom of the sea.

That's why even though they wanted to, she and Tenn both have given up. However, on a certain day she heard a report from Niña in Fairy Garden about a certain boy from Hoozuki. As for the boy, although he is a human being, he seems to be well-liked by fairies.

Tenn who heard that story said that he wanted to see the boy with his very own eyes, and asked Hoozuki for the permission to search for him. He failed several times, but was able to finally meet at last.

Apparently, it can be seen on Tenn's face that he seems to have taken interest to the boy somehow. And although Hoozuki brought the topic about contracts made him surprised, he was happy.

However, for an unknown reason whether it is a High Ranking Spirit's pride or not, he decided to put him to a test. In actuality, they can make a contract immediately without actually doing such things but Tenn was unexpectedly obstinate about this.

Therefore in this trial, perhaps the reason why Tenn picked up an unreasonable demand is to test the fighting spirit of the boy. He wanted to ascertain whether his heart won't be shaken in doing an impossible thing.

This is because the strength of the heart is the most needed requirement for the contract. But contrary to their expectations, the boy broke through the trial using a method that they could never think of.

It's not just Tenn, he also stunned everyone who were in the place. And that unforeseen expectations made Tenn happy. He might also have felt it, too. That

boy is surely a deserving contractor.

That's why he made a face full of joy. A joy in which a contractor, something that he has given up long ago was suddenly found, and his heart is probably dancing because of his contractor having a surprising strength.

Seeing Tenn's vibrant smile, in addition to the feelings of support for him, erased her feelings of jealousy that had appeared.

Perhaps, coming across to see this miracle, her feelings of vexation came out at the same time Tenn obtained joy.

Because she kept herself silent she was made fun by Hoozuki, but as she was looking at the smiling Tenn,

“.....be relieved, princess”

“.....eh?”

Hoozuki faced her with gentle eyes.

“your destined person will surely appear someday.....definitely”

“Ss-such things.....I didn't say that I need them.....”

She denied it, but her voice held no power in them.

“Hohoo, but before that you should succeed my position first”

“.....”

“Surely there are no more contractors for me, but for the princess, it's still possible. Although it isn't a long way off”

“What was that reckless remark..... please say that you're kidding?”

“Hohoho, your host will certainly appear. A person who will coexist with you well as a host, surely”

Looking at him brushing his beard while smiling, she leaked out a sigh. But those words of him ignited a light to her heart.

“Besides, look, maybe one of them will surprisingly become your host you know?”

He said while looking at Nikki and Camus. But she can't see them as a proper vessel in any possible angle.

“Besides, isn't it because of the princess' permission that these two were able

to come here?"

Certainly, they won't be able to come here if they haven't gotten permission, so hers allowing them is a fact.

"Well, there's no need to worry. I'll make sure it's according to your expectations"

Hoozuki's words sank into her chest gently. It will be according to her expectations. Yes. Even Tenn double-checked the boy in his own way.

If that's the case, then I too, must not give up. Too continue dreaming about the fated contractor that will come for me someday, as Hoozuki told me.

(.....but those two people.....Nah, it's impossible)

The first one is still a child, and the other person is a man who looks like a girl. Though she felt the two are possessing a spirit of a true warrior, compared to that boy, they gave off an atmosphere that doesn't seem to meet her standards.

(Hm.....that child, however.....)

She focused her gaze on the two people while being lost in thoughts. but

(.....must be my imagination)

She gave the answer and shook her head in disapproval.

Chapter 224 - Contract Execution

After Tenn's Trial, Hiiro who woke up immediately started the preparations for the contract at once.

The necessary medium for the contract is the Rending Blade·Zangeki. The sword is now placed between the two, and Hiiro and Tenn are now sitting in a cross-legged fashion.

"Try it once again, Glasses bastard.....no, Hiiro"

"What is it you yellow monkey?"

"Yellow monkey.....never mind. It's for verification. I'll begin to apply magic to this sword now"

"Yeah yeah"

Tenn explains while tapping the sword with his fingertip.

"This magic power, Hiiro, you are to synthesize it with yours. In other words, you mix the two magic powers and unify them as one"

"Easier said than done"

(Hiiro's POV)

Yes. This may be a simple theory as it sounds so easy but doing it hands-on is really difficult.

"Well, if you make a mistake, just think of some sort of rebound coming instead~"

He said while putting up a grin acting like it is someone else's problem. I resisted the impulse of wanting to hit his head by all means.

"Why are you acting like it's someone else's problem, Tenn. If it fails even you are in danger of disappearing, you know?"

Hiiro then frowned on the princess' remark.

"Disappear? I haven't heard of it?"

He only heard about the risk regarding the contracting party. However, if you think about it, you could arrive at the conclusion that even the spirit has to have

something to shoulder too.

(I was careless. But is he really fine with that...?)

Seeing Tenn smiling like he doesn't care what will happen makes you feel doubts that either he's careless or is not afraid at all.

"Hmm? Well, if the worst should happen, then so be it"

"You're shouldering a great risk to make this contract. How could you say that?"

"Dunno~ Well, I'm a genius, and strong too. That risk is too small for me to worry about"

The monkey talking with weird hand gestures made me lost my sense of reality for a moment. Even if you say that I was used to this fantasy world very much, this spectacle that you can only see in movies and the like make me wince a bit.

"Besides, I don't want to entrust my whole life to a suspicious guy either"

Tenn stared with such intensity. They're like a clear stream, without a hint of unease and cloudiness from within.

"Though I am putting on airs most of the time, when I want to get something, I give all my best to get it. So it's ok"

".....you seem to be anticipating so much"

"Isn't that obvious? My partner is the one whom I, a High-Ranking Spirit, have personally tried and tested!"

He turned back with a peace sign. To be frank, he looks like a simple-minded monkey, but a simpleton monkey might not be so bad for a partner after all.

"But the question is, do you still want to form a contract, knowing this kind of thing? This may be the end of you, you know?"

"What are you getting doubted for? As long as it's me, it will be alright"

".....Come again?"

Not only Tenn, but the princess and Hoozuki stared at me, speechless.

"I'm not the kind of person who dies in these things. So failure isn't possible!"

As I declared impudently,

"Uoooooooo! As expected of Master! So amazing!"

“Nn.....Hiro, so handsome”

Camus and Nikki praised highly. As they throw in their honest feelings, I feel a little good somehow.

“Ukyakyakyakya! You’re certainly right! I knew you are an interesting one!”

Tenn laughed while hitting the ground, while the princess can only stare at him, dumbfounded.

“Why? Where are you getting that confidence from? Well, I know Tenn was being overexcited about this. But still, the contract hasn’t even begun you know?”

“Ukiki! Be relieved, princess! You’ll understand soon!”

“.....what do you mean I’ll understand soon?”

“For us, failure is not possible!”

Eh? The princess exclaimed, but Tenn touched the tip of the sword without caring about her expression.

“Hey, Hiro! Let’s end this right away!”

“I’ll just flow the magic here right? Time to get into business”

“Ukiki, yep, that’s the spirit!”

I took a deep breath then touched the hilt of the sword calmly.

Then, the atmosphere became intense quickly, and gave a silence as if all the sounds disappeared from that place.

Nobody said a word. Because everyone knows that concentration plays an important role for the act, they could only do nothing but watch what will happen.

Even though Camus and Nikki cheered for me before making the contract, they couldn’t help themselves from making worried faces. I know that they believe in me, but I also understand the reason why they are giving such expressions.

I told them not to worry just in case, but to assure them, I must make this contract succeed first.

I closed my eyes and slowly discharged my magic power. Along with the other

magic power, they spread throughout the sword at the same time.

Pure magic power can only be suited to do the task. This is what I have foreseen in in the fight earlier. My body may be exhausted from earlier, but assuming this relaxed position is easier.

(.....!?)

Just now, I felt the magic enchantment mixing together at the center of the sword. It occurred a couple of times. This means that my magic power is matching with Tenn somehow.

Is our affinity really this good? I prepared myself for a big phenomenon happening when repulsion occurs the moment I touched it, but I only felt small symptoms of rejection at the beginning, and surprisingly, it is now mixing well with each other. They mixed so well it's like adding milk in a cup of coffee.

The two different magic powers swirled around to become one, then enveloped us two in dazzling white light. I feel the warmth of the light as it gently wraps me, and as if it was granted a heart of its own, I can feel the sword pulsating.

DOKUN.....

I felt another life in my chest at the same time. A sensation of wrapping one's heart with a gentle warmth is transmitted through my body.

"Kiki, that was dangerous.....so the pleasant sensation that those guys were referring to was this"

The ecstatic feeling Tenn was talking about is only on a level of soaking in warm water during a cold weather, but still, it is something that makes you feel comfort. Of course, I don't understand because I'm not the one feeling it personally.

They have heard of the rumors that a euphoric sensation could be felt when the spirits join with their contractors, but based on the words of Tenn a while ago, I can only confirm it as the truth.

"Oi, you can open your eyes now"

Hearing Tenn's words directly in my ears, I slowly opened my eyes. A smiling

Tenn stood before me.

But there something I'm worried about.

"Where is my sword?"

Wherever I look, the existence of my Rending Blade·Zangeki was nowhere to be found. I instantly thought that the contract failed so the medium disappeared, but because there are no problems with my body, and because of Tenn grinning like he knew something I don't, I thought otherwise.

But where did my sword went.....?

"Is this what you're looking for?"

Tenn pointed his chest with his thumb.

"There.....? Oi, don't tell me....."

"Bingo! I and Zangeki have now became finally one!"

"....."

I demanded an explanation to understand what happened.

If the contract were to succeed, the medium should fuse and unite with the spirit. Of course, the abilities of the medium will also change depending on the ability of the spirit possessing it.

"Oi, my waist is getting lonely. Return my sword at once"

As expected, it is kind of melancholic to lose a sword which has been your partner for a long time. So I wanting to get my sword back have some of my true feelings mixed in.

"Uhm, about that...hey, let me explain first!"

"Hmmm, looks like it's a success"

Hoozuki watched the whole scene in a quite distance from Hiyo and Tenn. Dazzling light suddenly wraps up the two people, and the sword which was in front of them disappeared like it was an illusion.

For Hoozuki, it was the indicator that it succeeded. If it were to fail, the medium will also disappear, but in an enormous magic explosion, instead of vanishing like what happened earlier.

Though he had already made a barrier in case it might happen, he was glad that it ended in an unnecessary worry.

“C-can we go now?”

Nikki's thoughts of wanting to go to Hiiro was transmitted shortly. Perhaps because she's being worried very much. Camus who's beside her is also getting impatient.

“Hohoho, he's probably receiving explanations from Ten about the contract in detail. Just wait a little more”

“Mumumu～”

Nikki moving impatiently looked like a dog that has been put to stay while waiting for her beloved owner. As for the other one,

“Hiiro.....safe.Thank goodness”

When Hiiro was surrounded by light, Camus almost dashed to save him, but Hoozuki stopped him. That is because if a third party were to disturb them, the possibility of failing will surely happen.

“.....isn't it nice, Tenn”

Though it was a soft mutter, Hoozuki was able to pick up the princess' voice.

“Hohoho, didn't I say so? And someday, princess will surely experience it, too”

“.....”

He gave a bitter smile to the girl who could only stare at them in silence.

“When I met him for the first time, I immediately thought that he was no ordinary person, but after exchanging contracts with a spirit, I now truly realize how outstanding he is”

“Hoho, did Nina also thought so?”

“Fuwa～, Orun is so sleepy, so sleepy.....”

Orun, the red-haired fairy who has lost interest shut down her heavy eyelids while on the top of Nina's shoulder.

“Fufu, not now, Orun. Endure it a little more”

“Fuwaai, I'll try～, I'll try～”

Her figure cutely talking while rubbing her eyes is so adorable.

“Hohoho, it seem that their talk has ended. You can go now”

They who have been waiting for those words as a signal, Nikki and Camus started running right away.

Chapter 225 - Nikki's Will

After I finished hearing about the benefits of the contract from Tenn, Nikki and the others who had been waiting came over. Her appearance gave off an atmosphere of a dog wagging its tail to its owner.

"Kiki, I guess I'll give back the sword first"

After Tenn said that, I felt something heavy on my left waist, and when I checked it, the Rending Blade·Zangeki which wasn't here a while ago had returned. It hadn't changed a bit, but according to Tenn, this sword has already become a part of his body.

"Well, let's try to get along from now on, Hiiro!"

After he said that, he jumped and landed on my shoulder, then patted my head. I feel more irritated of his being overly-friendly attitude.

".....you're heavy. Get off"

"Eeh~, but it is nice here! And we're already bound by a master-servant contract! I'm the master of course!"

"Don't kid with me you yellow monkey!"

I tried to shake him hard from my shoulder, but I felt dizzy all of a sudden, and my gait became unsteady.

Before I became aware, I was supported by something warm on the left side of my body. As if that existence had prevented me from falling.

"Hiiro.....Okay?"

It was Camus. It seems that he supported me. Besides him was Nikki who had been staring at me with a face full of worry. I took a deep breath, then

"Don't worry. It's because I used too much of my magical powers so I staggered a little. It's all right"

"Ukiki, yeah, that's right! You're too unreasonable! For a while that little lady, err boy.....what is this uncomfortable feeling.....Ah geez! Anyway, it's good that child over there have supported you!"

I kind of understand his feeling of uneasiness. Camus isn't a lady, he's a man. But because he looks like a girl and give vibes of one it was very hard to tell.

As I was intending to walk without being supported, I apologize to him and tried to stand alone, and went back to the place where a table is set, where everyone else is sitting all together.

From there was Orun, sleeping in Niña's shoulder.

"Fufufu, she spent the whole time having fun after your absence and tired herself out"

As what Niña said, if I recalled correctly Orun had remembered that I was coming here and was frolicking in high spirits. She was playing noisily with Nikki and the others for a while ago. A feeling of satisfaction can be seen on Orun's sleeping face.

"First of all I want to thank everyone, especially Hiiro-sama"

"Don't mention it. Or should I say I did it to earn a favor? Anyway, it's fine."

"Yes, Ufufu"

(From here the POV switches a lot. Don't blame me. Blame the author)
She made a beautiful smile, so beautiful that any man will surely get captivated by it no matter what they are. But as expected of Hiiro who is being surrounded by women of high levels all the time, he could only leak a sigh.

If there is a good looking guy like Aoyama Daishi were here, he will surely shine out if I were to evaluate objectively, more so if it's a beautiful woman. But I stopped that thoughts immediately as it didn't matter to me personally.

So after Hoozuki got a bird's eye view of everyone's faces, I was told that the gate was to be closed soon.

The gate is a rift of space from where Hiiro came. If it closes, it would take time to open it again.

And it is said that the passage to Fairy Garden should also be closed at once, too. Hearing about it, I could see a shadow in the princess' expression. The same could be also said from Niña who could only give a sigh with a face tinged with loneliness.

"Those two.....look very close"

Not that I want to hear it in particular, but Camus whispered to my ear. He seems to have heard the relationships of those two from Hoozuki, although it was heard originally from Nikki.

(I see. They're holding their reigns on their emotions because of their current positions.....)

Though I thought of it as but something irrelevant, it was also true that these two have their own circumstances. Thinking that it seems troublesome, I remained silent, then I noticed Nikki sending her gazes at the two people.

With knitted eyebrows, she's having the kind of face of someone who has thought of something and want to let it out but is unable to. As I was thinking why she is concerned with the two people that much,

"Well, anyway, you can feel at ease, Niña. The gate may close now, but it can now be possible to open it here once more. It was all thanks to Hiiro"

".....I see"

Though she replied firmly with a smile, there wasn't a trace of joy in her words. It seems that her current relationship with the princess became the splinter for it.

"U~n, you may have seen this, but that princess is always being dishonest with herself"

While Tenn says that while shrugging his shoulders,

"Yeah, I have seen it.....though no matter how you look at it she isn't the type to be frank with herself, isn't she?

"Ukyakya, you can say that again! Princess is so stubborn and obstinate with herself its stupid!"

After I got to the table, Tenn who was talking vividly was blown off by the chair which was being thrown out by the princess.

(That guy really doesn't learn his lesson either.....)

If you say it in such a loud voice, then you should have expected it to reach her. Then, the princess suddenly bowed toward Niña.

"We-We'll be hoping of meeting you again sometime"

Though she tried to leave immediately after saying that,

".....Eh?"

Princess stopped walking. No, she couldn't do anything but to stop. Because on her way, was Nikki spreading her arms apart, blocking her. She who was still beside me had gone over there before anyone is aware.

"Uhm.....Is there something you need?"

The princess asked in perplexity.

"Your farewell is no good desuzo!"

What is that stupid pupil doing? I asked my mind in reflex.

Everyone is at loss at Nikki's actions and can only stiffen. Nikki however, is pouting and throws a powerful gaze at the princess.

"Uhmm, what do you mean by that actually?"

She feigned calmly as much as possible.

"A farewell shouldn't be done with ill feelings!"

You can perceive that the princess panicked a little. However, she restored her expression to a composed demeanor at once.

".....wha, what is this child taking about?"

"Because"

"Eh?"

Nikki interjects the princess's words.

"Because, if you were unable to meet again, you will regret it very much!"

As having received a shock, the princess' lips was faintly shaking. But Nikki harbored sorrowful eyes as she looked at Hiiro, recalling a certain thing.

That girl.....so she remembered from that time.....)

It was when I met Nikki for the first time. The fear that brought her to..... though it is also related to her growth, I think she doesn't want others to have such an experience.

It was a painful and heart-breaking event. For this reason, I think Nikki doesn't want the princess to experience it herself and tried to stop her midway.

Hiiro who knew everything sent a calm glance to the princess. She who is an All-Seeing Race should now know how much her present remarks is not a lie and how heavy it is to her.

With that in mind, I took interest in what kind of reaction would she take. As of noticing the feelings of Nikki,

“.....Haha, you might not understand this because you’re still too young, I value something called distinction. So until I have made that distinction.....”
“What’s more important to you? That distinction or your important person?”
“!?”

Though the princess tried to talk back as an adult, being given a straight sound rebuttal that she cannot argue back, she gritted her teeth as she exposed her irritation.

“.....get out”
“Don’t wanna-desuzo!”
“I said get out!”

At that moment, a terrifying force gushes out of the princess and surrounds Nikki.

I should say as what you expect of a High-Ranking Spirit, to even influence her surroundings with just her haki. Camus vigilantly tried to go to Nikki, but I immediately made her stop.

Though he turned at me with a puzzled look saying “Why did you stop me?” I told her “It’s okay. See?” then said nothing anymore.

As Camus is being worried, Nikki took the haki head-on, causing her body to tremble and her face turn white, but still standing. However, not a step back was made from her.

“.....wh-why?”

As for why she stands in her way that much, I also don’t know. On the contrary, not even a sensation of being shaken was felt from Nikki.

Meanwhile, Hiiro made a big sigh. Even if just a little, his capriciousness woke up in order to help his pupil.

“sigh, Oi, snake girl”

“S-snake girl.....and, what is it?”

To her raised eyebrows clearly signifying her unpleasant mood, I moved my mouth.

“Once, there is a stupid fellow, but that guy isn’t always stupid”

“.....Huh?”

“and always thinking what’s right, and though it may not look like it, always idiotically charging ahead”

“.....”

“I’ll tell you something about that person. That fellow was very close to a certain guy. But one day, after just a trivial quarrel, they didn’t talk to each other for a while”

All the members as well as the princess listened to Hiiro’s story.

“Always being so worthlessly stubborn, thinking that sooner or later they will be able to make up soon. However, even a single conversation is not possible for them anymore”

“.....th, that’s.....”

“Yeah, That thing happened. That person has died”

Being at loss for words, the princess who is unable to refute looked down. Not only her, but also Hoozuki and Niña as well.

“That foolish pupil of mine and that guy can never reconcile throughout their lives anymore. This is the result of that trivial pride”

That time, sadness and suffering put the childish Nikki in pain as if stabbing a blade into her heart directly. For that reason..... she who knew the pain of the princess who is doing a similar thing couldn’t able to keep silent.

“So, how’s your ‘distinction’ faring?”

“.....”

“Well, for you it may be something that important”

“.....”

"However, as for me and that kid, we have no idea why we should really protect that distinction. She wants you to give priority to what's the most important thing you have"

Hiiro sighed in disgust as he stood up and went to Nikki's direction. He then closed her whitened eyes and held her in a princess-carry.

While holding Nikki, he moved next to the princess and said.

"Well, no matter what answer you give, it doesn't matter to me. Even then, compared to this fellow who kept standing even if she fainted, which is more of a fool I wonder?"

Apparently, it seemed that Niiki has been deprived of her consciousness from the time her body received the princess' haki head-on. Still, maybe because of her strong will, it didn't make her fall and remained standing.

While keeping his glare, Hiiro turned his gaze to Hoozuki.

"Oi, We want to go now. If we stayed here a little longer, it will eventually cause an uproar over there, and it's a lot of pain in the ass"

".....Alright"

After Hoozuki nodded, I sent a wink at Tenn who has returned to the table unnoticed.

"I'll leave the latter part to you"

"Kikii! You can count on me!"

"And also....."

"Eh?"

"Though I forgot this, the next time I come here..... get ready for your punishment okay?"

"Hii! U, u, ukiiiiiiii!"

Apparently, Hiiro didn't forget Tenn's punishment for playing a prank on him either. Tenn seems to have hoped that it will be forgotten as it is, but it didn't seem to go that well. He ran away to the depths of the forest with a terrified expression. It was totally a picture of a poor small monkey.

I returned my gaze to Hoozuki who seems to be smiling for some reason.

“Thank you”

“.....for what?”

“in various ways. That child too”

Still wearing that gentle smile, he sent a glance to Nikki. He truly wished to express his gratitude especially for the princess, even though the person in question hardened herself and turned back.

“Hiiro-san, see you again”

“if fate gives us a chance”

“Ufufu, too bad Orun is still in such state”

She was dripping her saliva while sleeping soundly on her shoulder.

“Well, she won’t be as noisy so it’s fine. Let’s go”

Camus steps behind and extends his eyes towards where Tenn ran off to and tried to chase after him. But then,

“Wait!”

My feet was stopped suddenly. this voice, it surely belonged to the princess.

“.....What is it?”

While holding Nikki, I turned around.

“.....n, name.....”

“Haa?”

she then thrusted her finger while blushing in deep red.

(TL Note: AKA the classic tsundere pose, like this)

“N,name! The name of that child!”

“.....didn’t I introduce her a while ago?”

“Uu.....”

In other words, she didn’t remember. The princess gave an embarrassing sight.

“.....Haah, She’s Nikki”

“.....Nikki.....Nikki.....hey”

She then approached and gently wrapped Nikki’s small hand with both of

hers.

“Really.....despite being so small.....you’re quite cheeky”

She gave a somewhat refreshing expression, contrary to her words. Then she took the white ribbon binding her hair, and tied it on the hand of Nikki.

“.....Thank you”

Though I could only see her lips move, I was able to almost hear her saying it softly.

(Heee, so this fellow knows how to smile)

Her smile, whom I had seen personally was richer than all of the women I had met until now.

“You, so you can smile like that. You know, I would prefer you if continue doing that”

If she were to put out an honest front like this, I will surely have a good impression of her, and this won’t go on a strange turn of saving her.

But in response to the words of Hiyo, the princess’ face reddened like a boiling octopus.

Wa, wawawawawhat are you saying! A-are you making advances on me!? I-I-I’m not such an easy woman to fall for that you know?”

As she yelled threateningly as her lips tremble,

“.....Huh? What the hell are you saying?”

I cannot understand what she wanted to say at all. How in Edea made her think would I am making a pass on her?

“eh.....?”

With Hiyo’s expressionless reaction, she was able to regain her usual composure. Then,

“Aaaah Geez! Anyway!”

The princess went and faced Niña. Niña on the other hand, was surprised at her sudden actions.

"Uhmm.....you see.....I, I want to apologize. No, it's not that, err.....I'm sorry!"

Being apologized suddenly, Niña was confused on how to react to the situation.

"Uhm.....will, will you forgive me.....Ni, Nia?"

With this, Niña's expression brightened and turned into a gleeful look like a flower in full bloom.

"Princess.....Of course, I'll gladly forgive you, princess"

Tears fell down on both of their eyes. They were tears of joy.

(Looks like my stupid pupil's fainting was worth it)

Despite the emotional situation before him, Hiyo continued advancing. Tenn who appeared from nowhere waved his hands urging them to hurry up. It seems he's very afraid of the punishment before him and wants to leave quickly. Then, at my back,

"Hiyo Okamura! The next time we meet, I'll make you acknowledge me by all means!"

While thinking that there isn't a need for me to acknowledge her in my mind, I moved my feet ignoring it. I turned my gaze again for a last look at the fairy-tale like place, then directed my sight to Tenn to make him lead the way.

(what a strange bunch of companions I have gotten.....)

"A dog for Nikki, a pheasant for Mikadzuki, and a monkey for Tenn. Well, for Nikki she only acts like one though.

(What am I, Momotaro.....?)

Anyway, what's good is I have obtained a new kind of power. Even though the basic problem is not settled yet, because in this encounter I obtained something, it's all right.

(.....but that explanation surely is a pain in the ass)

Thinking hard on how I would tell this Lilyn, and more importantly Silva when I get back, I left the fairy-tale like place and home of the spirits, the Spirit Forest.

(Author's notes)

The point of view changes in the next two episodes more or less. The setting is.....the Holy Land Ordina. There will be a lot of talks then afterwards something will happen.

Chapter 226 - Dark Footsteps on the Holy Ground

Oldine Holy Grounds, where the Hero was summoned to the world of Edea to save the Humas from distress, is said to have the hero spent its entire life span for it.

Only the remarkably huge buildings painted on a common white, and the temple which became a symbol for its beauty remained standing.

Being named the Great Temple of Oldine, it is the place where Humas and the Evila made the meeting for the alliance. Giving only bitter memories on the both of them, Portnis Gilviti, the Head Priest can only pay attention to the repairs of the building destroyed by the said dispute.

A beautiful woman inheriting the blood of the Gilvitis that served as the Head Priests for years, she became comrades with the Hero's company who came over in the past. Though she has passed thirty, she has a healthy white skin that makes you doubt about her age, and clear eyes suitable for a Head Priest.

"Fuu....."

A sigh leaks out from her well-regulated expression, a rare sight in her who always has a dignified atmosphere.

However, it's no wonder that she's at her wit's end right now. After all, it is concerning the tragedy that happened after the breakdown of the alliance. Fortunately, the temple was left almost intact, but many buildings in the site were destroyed by the Humas King Rudolf who transformed suddenly into a monster.

Moreover, it's not only the buildings, but also many of the priests and soldiers were rolled up in the commotion and died at this place. Something that is not supposed to happen in a holy ground had occurred, and without sparing time even for sleep, she can only work with the aftermath in regret.

(According to the report in Victorias, thanks to Judom settling it somehow, I'm

relieved. What's left is only for the populace to hear the story.....)

According to what is written at the documents at her hands, which was a letter having given by Judom, the Victorias' Guild Master on the other day, from it he seemed to be worrying a lot about this matter.

If the conference breakdown cannot be prevented, beside the recklessness of the king which we are unable to stop, though it maybe me just returning the favor.....

(you're still as serious as always.....)

The importance of gathering up a country is something that Potnis is unable to completely understand. However, she thinks that it really is just his nature. Although now is the most crucial period, she thought that his nature of always having groundless suspicion is the same as ever and can only smile bitterly.

(However, this is a very serious case this time)

Judom is a person with the talent of a prominent king, but unfortunately, he's from a lower status. Despite being a commoner, he is a man who serves as the guild master, and being close to the adventurers and the people, they will probably support him, but the other aristocrats are another story.

A commoner standing at the top. It is nothing but unacceptable for the aristocrats who looked down on commoners. And how will they act according to that dissatisfaction is the problem.

(Although he's the type to trust a person too much..... he didn't even ask me for help)

I cannot leave here now. I need to protect this place. I want to become his support for all the kindness he'd done to me, but the situation can't allow it.

As I made a sigh, a sweet flowery aroma drifted from somewhere. Thinking that it's strange as there's flower nowhere, and because it only lasted for a few minutes, I didn't mind it anymore.

It's just, when I stared at the documents, I felt something strange.

The sounds of hammering in a building being repaired should reach my ears at present. Did they take a break? It has become totally quiet as if everybody is

at their midnight sleep.

I placed the documents in the drawer from a desk and moved towards the window. I was at loss of words at the view seem from there.

Just by confirming at the vicinity of the entrance of the temple, you can see that many worshippers come here every day. Though it has decreased because of the incident, it's only to the extent of one or two few.

Even today a considerable number of people visit the temple to worship, and it isn't even the cut-off time yet. However, even if I move my sight to the edges of the window, not a single person was in sight.

"Wh-what is the meaning of this.....?"

Though there isn't exactly any abnormal situation happening yet, I can only stand petrified on how to understand the impossible situation that deviated from the norm.

DONDON.

I look back in surprise, to see that it's only a knocking at the door. If it's the usual then that priest should have come, but in this situation, even a knock sounds very eerie.

Even my intuition denies to hear the thing and let it pass. However, the knock resounded again, in which I can only mutter "Yes" while shivering in fear.

With a kachink! The door opened. I turned my glance to that entity behind the door.

Over there.....someone who is covered by a black robe on the whole body is standing.

Whoare you? I moved my mouth to ask, but not a single word came out. My body became stiff, and my movements are sealed.

The man of the black robe entered the room at ease. Behind him is a person with similar clothes. It seems that they came in two's.

(Who..... what are these people!?)

Among their eeriness, I can only feel fear. My instincts are screaming to run

away from this place, but my body doesn't move. Just what in the world did they come here for?

Rather, why did these people create such a strange situation in the first place?

While having these thoughts ran wildly in my mind, one of them forcefully teared of their black robe,

"Hey, Hey, Hey! The heavens, the land, and the people are in need! They are in need of the most gracious persona in the world! That's right! That persona is definitely me!"

.....huh?

From it was a person who totally played a scene in a stage drama exaggeratedly one after the other. Jewel are sparkling one after the other in his pure white clothes, and his presence is so standing out to the extent that it makes you step back by reflex.

"Do you know my name? No, that's not it. No one should not know me, right? Because..... that's right! I am marvelous!"

Suddenly, "Aah!" he put his hand on his head and posed while saying that.

"Aah..... my existence is very crime in itself..... Though I haven't introduced myself yet, nobody doesn't know the fame that I have! Ahh, I'm beginning to get scared of myself.....that this marvelousness of mine will kill me some time!" He spun round and round and hugged my body with both hands. He sure is quite tall, and as he waved his long golden hair which you can tell it's well maintained surely is beautiful. If he were to approach any woman with his looks he's surely have her cheeks dyed red. However.....

"Aah! What a sinful fool I am!"

If it weren't for his weird spinning and his gloomy narcissist behavior..... well, he's good-looking at least.....

".....keep it down you shithead"

That time, the other person dressed in black spoke to the narcissist one. The voice was tinged with irritation. However, unlike the narcissist one, it was the

voice of a lady.

“Ahaha! As I’m a tolerant person, I’ll let you to take me as shithead! Because I know that you’re jealous! Then, I’ll bear with it! Soiling your eyes to this poor face, I reflect for being too dazzling for you! I know, I know! You really want to take me for yourself, right? This own, elegantBeau-Johnny!”

“Who would like to take you, moron?!”

“Ahaha! Don’t be so embarrassed! That’s right, I am the beautiful and elegant Bejohnny! Bejohnny Orban!”

As if he didn’t hear anything, he began to spin around again, disregarding the mood of his surroundings.

“Aaah Geez! Why am I placed with this shithead in the first place?”

“Ahaha! Don’t you feel honored with this?”

“I feel extremely dishonored about this!”

With the somewhat irregular combination of the two of them, the pressure on my body loosened a little. For that I confirmed my voice in reflex, and confirming that I can speak once again,

“Uhmm, who are you guys? Why did you come here?”

Portnis asked the question she’d been wanting them to hear from the very beginning. And the noisier one answered.

“Aah.....you’re also quite beautiful..... Unfortunately it’s still inferior to mine! Because I am.....”

“I said keep it down you imbecile!”

When the person of the black clothes said so, she directed her gaze to me and gave a sigh.

“You, you’re the blood relative of Ronise Gilviti, right?”

“.....Who is that?”

“Then let me rephrase her for you..... The Naos of Light”

“!?”

“Haha, looks like she knows something”

I thought I had it well hidden. Not even a word was spoken, but to think that they’re just ordinary thieves, I was careless.

“Don’t tell me you’re.....”

“We sure are! We have come to receive the “Light”. Rather, is stealing the more proper word?”

My instincts felt hostility in that speech and behavior.

“Haha, it’s useless. You’re already under my own spell”

“Eh.....?”

When she realized, her shaking knees were bent in a snap.

“Oooh～! What a beautiful pose! However, compared to my own...”

The man who introduced himself as Bijohnny bent his own knee on the same way, with his left hand on his forehead, and his right hand raised high,

“This is the proper pose! How is it, beautiful, isn’t it?”

He smiled and showed his sparkling teeth, but she had no time for that. Dizziness, nausea, and most of all, suffocation. It attacked Portnis like symptoms of altitude sickness after climbing a high mountain.

“Now then, for the next part...”

The other figure in the black garment took out a single flower from her breast. Then, small particles fell on Portnis’ body as she waved that thing on her.

“Now, can you tell me where the “Light” is?”

What Portnis saw was the face of a girl smiling from the corners of her mouth as if she’s enjoying this.

Chapter 227 - Light of Naous

The black-robed figure is descending on a long spiral staircase. It was the person who appeared before Portnis a short while ago.

"That damned shithead. He better be watching over her properly"

Having gotten the whereabouts of the Light of Naos from Portnis, she was just on her way to find it. She left Bijohnny for the time being to watch over for anyone who may intrude just in case, but she's very worried whether he could handle the duty seriously.

(But to hide a big sanctuary underground sure is surprising)

This is the hidden stairway right under the altar which leads to the sacred room which is covered by an incredible power that the hero especially left.

(For this, magic is disabled in this area. However, in exchange the Hero exchanged his own life for it.....)

At the end of the stairs, was a big grandiose door.

"So this is the place....."

She approached the door and tried to push it gently, but seems that it won't budge even if she pushed it with all her might with it. While she doesn't feel any magic power in it, it seems that it was locked by something like a thick iron.

".....It doesn't seem to be operated by normal means. However....."

She took out a single flower from her bosom again. The flower this time is a bud, but for some reason the flower opened wide immediately, revealing its sharp teeth.

"I'm counting on you, Iron Eater Plant"

Several Iron Eater Plants are thrown at the door. Then they began chomping it chunk by chunk, eating the door with great relish.

"Magic can't be used here, but mine isn't magic. Well, that's why I was made to come here in the first place"

Thinking that it will take a while, she sat with her back against the wall.

(Still, it is too quiet in here)

Of course, it will definitely become a problem if there are people in this place, but with not even a soul in sight, her mind calmed down.

(A place far away from conflict.....The Sacred Grounds, huh. If the hero really thought of such a thing, then there should be no reason for him to hide this land in the first place)

In the legend, when the hero died, it turned its own body to light and showered upon the ground. Originally, the ground was dirty, a marsh of poison which many ferocious demons wriggled. Wanting to make the land a clean place, the hero squeezed out the last ounce of its strength and purified the said dirtied land.

After that, many flowering plants started to grow in the land, and it became one overflowing in nature. As magic was not usable, for it isn't even possible to release a tiny amount of magic power, demons were unable to approach the said grounds.

Judging that it was the pure intentions of the hero, the people began calling it Holy Grounds, and erected a building in praise of the hero. This became the Great Temple of Oldine.

(If this is really the hero I've been hearing about, then that person should have exerted more effort in widening the area rather than making this cramped space)

The black garmented person stood up slowly, and focused her attention towards a part of the door. There is now a hole enough for one person to fit in. Surrounding it were the Iron Eater Plants belching like an old man who had its full, lying on the floor.

"You all did well"

After passing through the hole she gave those words, and the Iron Eater Plants suddenly dispersed like smoke.

(Now then, why would someone like a hero protect such a place to the extent

of using its remaining life, I wonder?)

She went inside, identifying the four stone pillars standing before her. On the center there is something resembling a big container that looks like an object of art, while floating in the air and emitting strange light.

(So this is the Light of Naos, huh)

It has an appearance of a fireball. A fireball placed in a round object like a soap bubble. She tried to approach it, but her black robe turned into ash.

“Hmmm, I see, even the weapons enchanted with magic power is useless”

The knives hanging on her waist were lost.

“.....is this the dreaded power of protection?”

The black robe revealed an olive green bob cut haired girl with eyes filled with strong will. Furthermore the tip of her hair changes its gradation from yellowish to pale green.

(TL Note: So like Mayura’s hairstyle from Sousei no Onmyouji, only a little bit shorter?)

What’s noticing about her is the quite a number of transparent bottles hanging around her waist. Flowers and plants are packed in those bottles.

“But to burn the robe that his majesty have given to me with much effort, I’m soo gonna take it on that shithead later”

She put her hand on a small bottle, took out a flower, and placed it on the floor. The flower then grew exponentially, and the girl took a ride on a petal. She gradually approached the Light of Naos on no time at all.

She took another flower again and faced the Naos of Light. The petal then expands and wraps it up gently.

“Good, with this my mission is complete”

As if having freed from the midst of darkness, I opened my eyes. Hearing voices of somebody, it stoke my consciousness awake.

As I raised my body in a hurry, there are the narcissist and a strange girl with filled bottles in her waist before me. While they have seemed to notice me,

“Aah..... can’t you wake up more gracefully? Like this!”

Without changing his smile, Bijnanny languidly sprawled on the floor, and holding his exposed chest,

“Nnn..... good morning. What a wonderful day, isn’t it, Mademoiselle?”

Frankly speaking, I don’t want to watch this anymore. It makes me want to puke a little.

“Just ignore this dimwit. By the way, you over there”

Upon hearing her voice, I found out that she’s the other one in the black robe earlier. For such a girl to do something like a thievery, I turned pale in my face.

“I received the light already”

“Wha!?”

Then she showed a flower. And from the gaps of the petals of the bud, light is gradually released.

“Don’t tell me.....No way!?”

“Regretfully, I can’t show you the contents. If I were to show it to you in this place, it will become a problem in various ways, don’t you think?”

No, even if she didn’t confirm it, Protnis was sure. That’s the Light of Naos inside the bulb. The container which is entrusted to them to protect for many years. Her guts is telling her it’s the real deal.

“R-return it immediately!”

That’s why all the more it is to not hand it over to these robbers here.

“Nonononon. That’s not beautiful”

Bijnanny waved his index finger.

“Whawhat are you.....”

“In this situation, do you think you who doesn’t know combat can do anything? Well, it may be beautiful if you are.....but, alas! You are inferior to me!”

By and by I felt disgusted. Even though I look like this, I’m still quite young, I always pay good attention to my appearance, and was even praised for being beautiful from the people I met. With this, I feel more or less irritated of the

speech and behavior of this man as a woman.

“Sigh*, hey you, if you kept on making him occupied, you’ll just tire yourself out. Rather, you can’t even move from your place, right?”

“Eh?”

By the time she said that, I noticed it for the first time. My body became stiff again. I can’t move. And before I noticed, the girl is already holding a yellow flower in her hand.

“.....Ah, this fragrance!?”

“Oh, you finally noticed? That’s right, the fragrance came from this flower. This is the Bewitching Plant. You’re in my illusion now. Ah, by the way, this isn’t magic. It’s just the effect of this fellow”

Seeing her smiling with that creepy grin made me shiver. It was a smile filled with chills even though she’s a little girl.

“Now that’s our business is already done here, let’s pack up. I’ll give you my name in honor of enduring the effect of my Bewitching Plant. One of the Matar Deus, Kainavi. Kainavi Fonia”

“If Kainavi introduces herself, then this one too! The one needed by the heavens, the earth.....”

“You already gave your name, shithead!”

“Ahaha! No matter how many times I introduce myself, you can’t deny its beauty! So Kainavi, are you ready to make your disappointed face smile?”

“Huuh!?”

“You seeThis Bijohnny can’t lose to a beau-jenny..... No matter what, Bijonny won’t give in.....fufufu! Ahaha! Get it? You have witnessed rumored beautiful joke of Bijohnny!”

(TL Note: I know, I know, the beau-jenny joke is as shit as it is, but it tried my best. The raw is ビジョニーはビジョニ負けない..., (Bijoni wa bijo ni makenai) where the 2nd one (bijo) means beautiful woman while (ni) is just a participle. Basically he just made a knock knock joke. A bad knock knock joke, without the knock knock. Well, every knock knock joke is shitty in the first place)

“.....okay okay, we get it. Just don’t make my headache worse”

Portnis agreed to Kainavi from the bottom of her heart. Leaving aside

Bijohnny dancing gleefully, Kainavi straightened her appearance and turned her gaze back to Portnis.

With this we'll part ways. When you open your eyes, the common sense far from the norm awaits"

Unable to resist the siege of drowsiness, her eyelids drooped, and her vision was wrapped in darkness.

When I woke up, I was lying on a chair. Was it all just a dream? I heard the noises of the usual construction and the voices of people from the outside.

However, my consciousness is warning me like a loud siren upon this overwhelming sense of reality.

While cold sweat is sprouting in my whole body, I went down the stairway leading to the Sacred Room immediately.

A hole on the door as if a fruit eaten by a worm. And the object of art which they had protected in their entire existence.....was lost.

(Aaah.....I'm very sorry, Ronise-sama.....)

I can only hung my head down in regret. The scenery which is always constant outside, projecting their daily lives.

From now on, the common knowledge of this scenery will change. Being protected by the power of the hero doesn't change. But the one the hero was trying to protect? It didn't exist here any longer.

As Kainavi had said, only Portnis who knows this will pass this hidden truth from now on.

Chapter 228 - A man named Cruzer Gio

Shanjumon Cave. Its location isn't far away from the Demon Country Xaos, but only a few come here. The reason is that the topography of the interior changes whenever someone enters.

"What's with this strange dungeon?" is what is asked often. Rumors say that the reason why the geographical features change is due to the work of a magic tool.

It is said that the magic tool does it in order to prevent its intruders from getting closer to it.

Right now, an odd group of three people and one animal had set foot in the said complex cave.

"Really, this place is as gloomy as ever"

Lilyn clicked her tongue in dissatisfaction. She walked in a uniform speed while her long red hair swayed to and fro.

"Nofofofofo! Careful milady, it's pretty dark so watch your steps"

Leading the three was the perverted butler Silva. Next to him is the pink-haired twin-tailed maid Shamoe.

"Aren't you tired, Mikadzuki-chan?"

"Kui!"

Yes, the animal, or you say the bird, is Mikadzuki. With luggage tied on her back, she walked the cave with strong steps.

"But it was a good call to bring that bird! With this, we can carry a lot of food!"

As Lilyn said so, Mikadzuki raised a cheerful cry as she was being praised.

"When Hiyo-sama person-ized her, I was surprised, but I never thought that she could also change into her demon form freely"

"KUIKUI!"

As Silva had said, Mikadzuki who was originally a Rydepic obtained the ability to transform into a human through Hiiro's word magic, but it seemed that she also has a kind of ability to return into her original form.

(TL Note: Mikadzuki's species was previously named as Raidpic, but since the original is spelled ライドピーク (Raidopiku, pronounced as ride-o-pi-qu), I made it Rydepic, as it sounds closer)

Therefore, Lilyn who parted ways from Hiiro and went somewhere brought Mikadzuki as their luggage carrier.

She doesn't say a word of complaint, probably because she's the same type as Samoe. What's more, she is even happier of being useful to them.

"Still, even though I come here for many times, this mysterious structure never ceases to amaze me. Isn't it, Silva?"

"Yes, milady. Though if the hidden treasure of this Shanjumon Cave is located, it will turn back to being an ordinary cave"

The cave is simply too vast. Underground, many twists, turns and branching roads appear like an ant nest. If you lose your way even once, you'll never be able to return back alive.

"Even for me who is a 'defective spirit', no matter how complex the path is, we'll never lose our whereabouts, but I can't see where the treasure is at all"

"Hmph, That guy really likes living in such a troublesome place"

"Agreed. We are getting close now, milady"

In order to soothe the bad mood of his master, he pointed out on one of the passages.

"Straight ahead and we'll be on our destined residence"

"Well, what are we waiting for? Let's hurry"

When the three people and one animal went through the passage,
"Kishaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

An eerie cry was heard all of a sudden, and something fell from the ceiling above.

“Oh, a swarm of red spiders”

“Hmph. It is common sense that a red spider which is classified as a unique monster does not act in groups. Is this because this place is also twisted by that mysterious power?”

“How would I know? Still, this is a waste of time. Step back”

Lilyn said so as she stepped in front of everyone.

Like its name, the red spider is a spider dyed red like blood. However, its size is bigger than a human being. If an ordinary person were to meet this thing, he/she should make escape his/her first priority.

But Lilyn twisted her lips to a grin.

“Now then, let’s get this done in a minute”

Said Lilyn, with eyes glowing in red. The ferocious demons encircling her began to step back, as if fearing the existence if the small girl.

However, one didn’t give in to its fear and with a piercing screech, jumped at Lilyn.

BUSHU!

In just a split second, a huge golden spike pierced the body of the red spider, skewering it on the ground.

“Gi.....Gyaa.....ga.....!?”

It was still alive, but one after another, countless spikes which came out of nowhere pierced the whole body of the red spider. It breathed its last in no time.

Lilyn who was just standing doing nothing sneered and crossed her arms. Frightened by the scene, as the other red spiders begun to retreat all at once,

One of them was wrapped up in flames, and the other was its entire body coated with ice, all at the same time. That strange phenomenon happened to the other spiders one after another, and one by one the demons died.

“What, one minute hasn’t passed yet, you know?”

She pouted to the unsatisfactory result, and with a short sigh,

SNAP!

A snap of a finger resounded. Like a glass shattering, the disastrous scenery of the swarm of red spiders vanished in front of Lilyn.

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP.

Someone's clapping was heard. It came from the passage the one they intended to enter a while ago.

"As expected of the Red Rose Witch. Even my Fantasia Magic is just a piece of cake for you"

A slender man with yellow hair stood there, smiling. Not a single trace of strength could be felt from him, to the extent that makes someone think "why is a weak man like him doing in this dangerous place?", if not for the katana hanging on his waist. But what's really standing out are the beast ears on his head.

"Can you just quit living in this place already.....Cruzer?"

The said man is Cruzer Geo, a strange fellow living in the strange place called Shanjumon Cave. According to him, he came and live here in order to avoid disturbance from the outside as he does his favorite things.

Cruzer is a blacksmith. Only a few knew his appearance, but his name and creations are famous in all parts of this world.

Master Blacksmith Cruzer. There is no one in the armament working population who doesn't know his name and his weapons. It is said that his weapons cannot be matched even by first-class blacksmiths in the world.

His creations are so highly appreciated that no one in this word doesn't desire them. It is so rule-breaking that in this age, the camp who gets the most of his works will surely bring victory.

Therefore all the races sought him with bloodshot eyes. Though the fact of three kings of the world chasing after one beastman is strange, but considering his ability, it was convincing enough.

Let's give an example. Can you cut iron with a sword? This could be a yes or a

no. If a person with considerable skill handles it, he/she could even cut it in one swing.

Then how about a namby-pamby old man? A kid? Is it possible for their trembling arms to cut that hard metal with a sword? Nearly impossible. No matter how well made the sword is, it won't be able to achieve its full potential if the one who handles it isn't skilled enough.

However, Cruzer's blades are a different league of their own. The user doesn't need any skill. Just make the sword touch the iron, let it go and it will cut through it just by its own weight like tofu.

No matter how exceptionally talented the others be, no one was able to reproduce that incredible sharpness to a blade like Cruzer.

Cruzer's swords were then succeeded by whips that can be moved freely depending on the will of the user, then axes that produce explosion just by touching, and brought the world to a storm.

However, after witnessing the tragic consequence of the weapons he had made, he tried to stop making weapons anymore. However, calculating how disastrous it is if they're to lose him, the kings chased after him one after another, and as a result of running around, he ended up in Shanjumon Cave.

Now, he makes a living by making and selling things used for housework such as kitchen knives. Of course, he comes out disguised while selling his works in Xaos.

(TL Note: Does he also make a set of orihalcum kitchen knives?)

"By the way Cruzer, I need you to do me a favor"

Lilyn and the others went to his home to see him face to face. Although it's more of a cave than a home, in order to be easier to live in, he only finished one cellar. Perhaps the other areas around here are specialized for his personal manufacturing.

In the room, a mat similar to a tatami was spread on the floor, and there stood a low dining table and a bookshelf. Lilyn, who hasn't even touched the served tea thrusted the main business at hand immediately.

Sipping the tea in a calm demeanor without breaking his composure, Cruzer

began to talk.

“Lilyn-san, as I have said before, I refuse”

“Why? This isn’t unprofitable even for a bastard like you, you know?”

She bluntly told with raised eyebrows, but Cruzer who’s expression didn’t even change a little,

“You said you’ll make “a place where all people can enjoy”. Sure, it’s an attractive proposal, but that will be impossible”

“Y-You can’t say it’s impossible if you don’t even try!”

She beat the desk in reflex. If it was the ordinary, a crack would be made, or worse, it may get destroyed, but not even a scratch was made on the table. This only proves that its strength is so excellent that it’s aggravating. Or as expected of a Cruzer product?

“Though I’m a little ignorant of the present situations, I can still understand that the world doesn’t yet desire peace.”

Which means that they still desire for war.

“And also, the children that I’ve made are also being taken good care of for that war. Well, whether they can take care of it or not depends on their users”

His smile turned to something shaded with self-ridicule. The “children” are referring to the weapons he created.

“I realized how stupid I was. Of course, I don’t regret that I made those children. However.....about how they handle my children, and the places they have gone through.....I can’t bear to see it anymore”

Regret and sorrow filled those words. Though he doesn’t regret making them, he probably regretted the fact of handing it to the people who came to buy the weapons.

After selling it to those merchants, he who was young that time thought that his weapons will become the foundation to acquire peace in the world. Well, it could be said that he only wanted to see his children’s figures fly and reach world.

However, the merchant who couldn’t find the true value of the weapon

simply sold it off for a sum of gold. And as a result, the weapon reached the eyes of the king, and was utilized for war.

"I was really stupid. If I just think about it even a little, I should have understood that my children will surely be used for war. However, I was raising my head too high and didn't see what's beneath me"

Extra Chapter - Popularity Vote Announcement!

Long time no see. I didn't expect I have to take this project again sooner. But seeing how the trend of the project is going down hill, I couldn't help give a helping again.

There are a lot of things you want to ask, a lot of things I want to say. Let me say it in here very briefly.

Me first, alright?

Anri-sama is very sorry that she had left the project without updating anyone what happened. Reasons are obviously RL, but I'm also at fault for irresponsibly leaving without any notifications.

I'm very grateful to AeRoSol31 (Aero, for convenience sake) who had continued where I have...yeah, slacked off (ouch). Although I'm glad someone decided to pick it up after months of inactivity, I'm also disappointed to myself for somehow passing it to him forcibly without any help or guidance.

Lessons learned? At least have another translator who can fill the gaps when the other is busy. So I decided to invite a collaboration with Aero, however, it seems the person is also in the midst of a critical event of his RL. I hope he can come back, Anri-sama can't do it alone. (Or else I disappear again. Kidding. But very likely if no one would help.) For now, I'll do what I can.

Now then, I suppose there are things first that must be put in order. I learned that promising a bulk release is too hard to accomplish. I realized it the hard way because translating chapter by chapter without break will seriously break me, especially my motivation to do it freely. So I will vow in here that I'll return to my usual pace, once chapter at a time release policy.

For the release dates, as usual it's not going to be every day like before, I have my own problems in RL, so that's a serious "no". I won't also be saying when would the next chapter be. And I won't promise any bulk release anymore. I don't want expectations riding on me when I have a lot of expectations I'm

carrying to fulfill in my RL.

Since this is my first time translating again, I will see first what kind of pace will I be making before I can give you some heads up on how many chapters I can post in a week.

Right now, I translated the chapter after Aero's recent post. The Popularity Vote Chapter was what caught my attention. So I'm going to retranslate it. (Krud-san, thank you for translating this.)

I needed to know if my skills have become rusty or not before I proceed in translating the main chapters. So here you have it, have fun.

"From here on out, this is going to be my debut!" (Arnold)

"Nofofofof! This butler will also serve as the emcee of this event!" (Silva)

"Now to get things started, let us first announce the results of the heroine group!" (Arnold)

"This one agrees with that choice! The heroine group... ah, what sweet sounding words." (Silva)

"H-hey, what's wrong with you?" (Arnold)

"This one is deeply conflicted by these charming young ladies representing the heroine group ranking! Nofofofof!" (Silva)

.....

"A-anyway, leaving Silva aside, let us start the event! First up are those who received one vote!" (Arnold)

Aoyama Taishi

Kiria 3

Kiria 2

Kukulia

Nina

Tenn

Yukiona

Aqua Hound Meat

“.....say Silva.” (Arnold)

“What’s the matter?” (Silva)

“I thought it was just my imagination but.... Is it just me or are there some things voted there that shouldn’t have been voted as a heroine?” (Arnold)

“Now that you mention it, the Kiria’s are our enemies right?” (Silva)

“No, no no! That’s not my point! Can’t you see the name, Aoyama Taishi? He’s a hero and also a man! Tenn also is a man— I mean a male animal! Yukiona too shouldn’t have been there! It’s a small animal! And what’s most shocking is why in the world would anyone vote for an ingredient in this heroine section!” (Arnold)

“Nofofofofo! Ah, the Aqua Hound meat, that was certainly a delicacy. Just remembering it is making me throb this much, to the point that I want take it with me to bed! Nofofofo!” (Silva)

“Quiet old guy! Don’t get excited all of a sudden! Just how much do you love this meat that you are having delusions of it?!”

“Even the owner of this world doesn’t mind this kind of peculiarity, you know?” (Silva)

(TL note: I don’t know how translate this one. It’s so loose that I can’t find the reference of it. そういう性癖の持ち主だって世界にはそれこそごまんと)

“As if that’s true! Sheesh.... Anyway, let us proceed with those who got two votes!” (Arnold)

Silva

Shamoe

Akamori Shinobu

Kiria 5

Tomoto Sui

“.....oi, there seems to be some disturbing names nominated on both ends of the list?” (Arnold)

"Nofofo, this is making me shy." (Silva)

"Don't get embarrassed you fool! Why are you included in this list! Moreover, two votes at that! And furthermore, why is the author nominated as well? What the heck is this? What do the people expect by voting these people?!" (Arnold)

"Now now, please calm down Arnold-dono." (Silva)

"Silva..." (Arnold)

"Even the owner of this world doesn't mind this kind of peculiarity, you know?" (Silva)

"You said this a while ago already!" (Arnold)

"Nofofofo! I'm extremely and humbly delighted for voting for this butler! Thank you very much! Nofofofo!" (Silva)

".....haa, screw this. Let's go to those who got three votes." (Arnold)

Musun

Rarashik

"I see, Shishou's rank is in here, huh? Hm? I'm not familiar with this one, who is Musun?" (Arnold)

"She is the employed head chef residing in the Demon King's Castle of Xaous. All the dishes she made were quite marvelous and delicious, even Hiyo-sama was very fond of her exquisite dishes." (Silva)

"What did you just say! S-so she's my rival, huh? I want to meet this Musun." (Arnold)

"And she's also quite a beauty you know?" (Silva)

"Hohou~, then by all means — ouch! W-who the heck hit m— Eeh! Shishou!?" (Arnold)

"Quiet dimwit! Don't ruin the debut of your master to a girl who you haven't even met. You have quite some nerve to do that, huh?" (Rarashik)

"I-it's not what you think Shishou. This is....different" (Arnold)

"I'm going to punish you later." (Rarashik)

“N-nooooooooooooo way!” (Arnold)

“By the way, to those people who voted for me, you have my thanks! In other words, you want me to dissect you right? Alright then, I’ll gladly teach you things that you aren’t aware of yourself from head to toe, of course I mean it thoroughly. Come to the examination room later, I’ll be waiting.” (Rarashik)

“And there she goes. Oh? What’s wrong, Arnold-dono?” (Silva)

“Punishment is scary Punishment is scary.....” (Arnold)

“Fumu, it appears that he has been reduced to this. If that’s the case,” (Silva)

“G-g-good day everyone! I-I will be replacing Oji-san as your temporary replacement hosut — auu.” (Muir)

“My my, Muir-dono! This is quite a surprise! By the way, that was a lovely gesture earlier. Nofofo!” (Silva)

“Auuu.... Please treat me well.” (Muir)

“Then let us proceed with those who received 4, 5 and 6 votes respectively!” (Silva)

4 votes - Mikazuki

5 votes - Okamura Hiiro

6 votes - Arnold

“Ooooh! This is...very astonishing indeed!” (Silva)

“I don’t get it. Isn’t this the heroine section? I understand if it’s Mikazuki-chan, but why is Hiiro-san and Oji-san in here as well?” (Muir)

“Listen closely Muir-dono. What I’m about to tell you is a world you may not know of yet.” (Silva)

“(Gulps) “ (Muir)

“Now imagine Hiiro-sama and Arnold-sama together on the same bed....” (Silva)

“Shut uuuuuuuuuuuup!” (Arnold)

“O-oji-san?!” (Muir)

“Nofofof! What perfect timing you have right there, Arnold-dono!” (Silva)

“Shut your mouth Hentai-Jiji! Don’t make Muir imagine such things!” (Arnold)

“Calm down, even the owner of this world doesn’t mind this kind of peculiarity, you know?” (Silva)

“You are still using those same words again!” (Arnold)

“Awawawa! P-please calm down Oji-san!” (Muir)

“I agree! You should calm down for a bit! Kihahaha!” (Mikazuki)

“Ooh! It’s Mikazuki-dono!” (Silva)

“That’s right! Thank you for giving me so many votes! I’m happy! So very very happy! Ah, a bird just flew away! Wait for meeel!” (Mikazuki)

“Ah, don’t run so fast Mikazuki-chan!..... And she’s gone.” (Muir)

“M-maa, I’ll at least say thanks for those who nominated me. Thanks guys. But I still don’t understand how I deserve those 6 votes..haa” (Arnold)

“Now now Oji-san. What’s important is that you are popular!” (Muir)

“But being nominated in this kind of section, it feels kind of unnecessary though...” (Arnold)

“Haha... now then, the next one is someone who got 7 votes!” (Muir)

“Hm? Are you perhaps talking about me? That shouldn’t be surprising. Though I rarely appeared on the main story, but appearance-wise I’m a direct descendant of the 『Spirit King』after all. I’m happy that I got tenth place, but I’m a little discontented of it.” (Hime)

“Even though we haven’t revealed what seat place was next.... As expected of the tsundere, Hime-dono!” (Silva)

“W-who is the tsundere you are speaking of! Please don’t casually call me by such names! Ah, but I’m grateful for those who voted for me, so....t-thank you.” (Hime)

“As expected of a genuine tsundere! Nofofoco!” (Silva)

“Whatever! If there is no more business for me in here, I’m leaving!
Goodbye!” (Hime)

“Un, that girl is so comprehensible.” (Arnold)

“Haha, then the next one is the ninth place. Receiving eight votes and gaining
the ninth seat is this person!” (Muir)

“Err...i-is it alright for me to appear in such a showy event?” (Minamoto Shuri)

“Of course you are! That’s because those plump chest of yours is absolutely
‘justice’! Nofofoco!” (Silva)

“Uuuu....” (Shuri)

“Hey gramps, she’s apparently not comfortable with this kind of topic.”
(Arnold)

“Though you say it like that, I also noticed Arnold-dono looking at Shuri-
dono’s chest as well!” (Silva)

“Na!?” (Arnold)

“Oji-san....?” (Muir)

“Y-you are mistaken Muir! Ah, please don’t back away from me young lass!”
(Arnold)

“Err, I’m happy that you have voted for me. Thank you! Well then, I’ll take my
leave!” (Shuri)

“Please wait! There’s an explanation for this!” (Arnold)

“Nofoco! That was quite unfortunate Arnold-dono!” (Silva)

“You! It’s your fault why it became like this!” (Arnold)

“Haha...le-let’s move on shall we. The next one is the eighth place who
received 9 votes!” (Muir)

“Hello everyone! I’m very happy for choosing me as eighth place. Thank you!”
(Nikki)

“Ooh! So it was Nikki-dono!” (Silva)

"I've already returned my thanks to those who voted for me! With this, I wonder if Shishou will praise me?" (Nikki)

"Surely he will. Probably a pat on the head." (Silva)

"I-is that so! Then, I will immediately look for Shishou! Byebye!" (Nikki)

"It's refreshing to see an energetic child like that." (Arnold)

"I agree, Nikki-chan is so cute!" (Muir)

"Fumu fumu, the following person is the 7th place. Acquiring 10 votes in total, this person is...." (Silva)

"Nyahaha! I've become so popular! So happy!" (Crouch)

"It's one of the Gabranth's Strongest Three, Crouch-san!" (Muir)

"Unya? By the way, where is Hiiro nya?" (Crouch)

"Eh? If I remember correctly, Hiiro-san was reading a book on the other side." (Muir)

"Nya?! If what you say is really true nya! Hirooooooooooooooo!" (Crouch)

.....

"That girl is really like a typhoon." (Arnold)

"U-un." (Muir)

"Nofofof! Then let us continue! The following received a total vote of 13 and is ranked 6th. This person is!" (Silva)

".....greetings everyone." (Eunice)

"Ah, Eu-chan!" (Muir)

"Muir, I don't know what's the best thing in face of this event." (Eunice)

"That's easy, you should express your thanks to everyone!" (Muir)

"Is that so?..... I understand.... Thank you for putting your votes on me. It made me very happy." (Eunice)

"Eu-chan is so cute!" (Muir)

"Upu! Clinging to me so suddenly is dangerous Muir." (Eunice)

"Ahaha, oops, sorry about that. Also congratulations Eu-chan" (Muir)

"Thanks. Is it alright to stay in here?" (Eunice)

:"Of course we would, especially if it's Eu-chan!" (Muir)

"Ooh~ as I thought, seeing such an affectionate atmosphere between two beautiful young girls is really, hmm, pleasant." (Silva)

"Whatever you do is none of my business, but don't you go saying strange things to those innocent girls, alright? Well then, resuming to our announcement, the next place has received quite a number of votes. Here I go! (Imagine him flipping the nominee cards) Representing the 4th place with 26 votes, two persons was nominated! The first one is our lovely pretty flower, Muir Casteirrrrrrrrrrrrrr!" (Arnold)

"Eh!? I'm 4th place!?" (Muir)

"And the other pair, Garbranth's Second Princess, and also Muir's best friend known as the Song Princess! Mimiru Kinggggggggggggg!" (Arnold)

"Fufu, we did it, Muir-chan." (Mimiru)

TL Note: (Imagine them making a high five.)

"Mimiru-chan!? Eh? We are tied with the same ranking!?" (Muir)

"That's correct Muir-chan! However, before we continue this conversation, let's reward the people who voted for us with our gratitude." (Mimiru)

"Ah, you are right." (Muir)

"Everyone who voted for us. Thank you very much!" (Muir & Mimiru)

"Congratulations you two." (Eunice)

"Thanks Eu-chan." (Muir)

"I greatly appreciate your kind words, Eunice-san." (Mimiru)

"Fumu, three beautiful young girls.... This is getting me excited~" (Silva)

"Old man, you're having a nosebleed you know?..... but I understand your feelings (Fatherly tears). Anyway let's move on. Representing the third place

with 35 votes is..... The present ruler of 『Evila』, the Demon Lord! Though this girl may have gaps in her public and private life, she's an idealist who still has a long way with her love life! And her name is, Eveam Grant Early Eveninggggggggggggggggggggg!" (Arnold)

"Eh!? I was voted for 3rd place!? That's quite...unexpected, even though I should be delighted about this...err, anyway, you have my gratitude for this!" (Eveam)

"So stiff! That's too formal, Eveam-dono!" (Silva)

"But if I don't act firmly like this, it might ruin my reputation with the people of Evila." (Eveam)

"What are you trying to say. To begin with, you are mostly known by the readers as lovely woman who is friends with Hiiro-sama." (Silva)

"Ah! Ah! Ah! What are you trying to start with this!" (Eveam)

"Eh, do I need to spell out? Alright then, Eveam-dono's passionate feelings for Hir—" (Silva)

"Stooooooooooooop! T-that's not true you knooooow!" (Eveam)

"Oi old man, aren't you getting carried away? Her face is as red as an octopus when she fled you know?" (Arnold)

"Nofofofo! I'm just fulfilling the expectations of the readers." (Silva)

"What the heck does that mean? Oh well, not that I mind it anyway. Alright, let's proceed! Representing the 2nd place with 41 votes! She's no other than..... The Little Red Devil! She's the outstandingly popular Tsundere-ojousama! A loli who has both power and cuteness! And her name is Liliyn Li Reysis Red Roseeeeeeee!" (Arnold)

".....tsk." (Liliyn)

"E-err, why are you in a bad mood?" (Arnold)

"....." (Liliyn)

".....err....." (Arnold)

"Nofofofofo! Apparently, it appears Milady is not satisfied for not getting the

first seat" (Silva)

"Oh. That makes sense. But I think getting second place is also a splendid result you know?" (Arnold)

"Hmph! Anything below 1st place is the same as the last rank! Are you perhaps saying that I'm not the best appropriate person to be on Hiyo's side?" (Liliyn)

"N-no, not at all!" (Arnold)

"Ku! Why am I not the best one! Oi Silva, what is the meaning of this!" (Liliyn)

"I understand what you are trying to imply, but Milady I think you are misunderstanding something." (Silva)

".....?" (Liliyn)

"There a lot of people who voted for you Milady, what's more this is a popularity vote where you got the best lead right now, are you still not satisfied with these results?" (Silva)

"...I see, so this is a trial that tests upon how well you receive the given result. Umu, though I'm a bit dissatisfied for receiving 2nd place, I'll overlook this and receive the merit obediently. Also..." (Liliyn)

"Milady?" (Silva)

"....I'm not h-happy because you gave me your stupid votes or anything, since it's natural for me to have this kind of recognition, but, how do I say it, t-thanks. Thanks for voting me." (Liliyn)

"That expression is so cuteeeeeeeeeeee!" (Silva)

"Uwa! You! Don't suddenly hug me you perverted old bastard!" (Liliyn)

"Bugaho!?"(Silva)

..... (The rest are sighing in disappointment)

"...a-anyway, those two seem to have gotten an understanding, so let's proceed to the last one!" (Arnold)

"I agree" (Muir.)

“My sentiments exactly.” (Mimiru)

“Yes” (Eunice)

“Ehem! Here I go then! (Flips the nominee cards) Oooh! The first place has a one point gap with the 2nd place!” (Arnold)

“What did you say! A one point gap!?” (Liliyn)

“And the one who achieved this one-point gap and who will represent the glorious place of the 1st seat is this persoooooooooooooon!” (Arnold)

“.....is this okay?” (Camus)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

“Oh, isn’t that great? Though he’s a man.” (Arnold)

“Impossible! I lost to a man!?” (Liliyn)

“.....haa (disappointed sigh?) “ (Female group)

“Nofofof! This result has developed into another surprising matter once again!”

“Well, at least the female readers are quite satisfied with this result.” (Arnold)

“Did I....do something bad?” (Camus)

Ururururu

TL note: (Imagine Puppy Eyes)

Everyone: (If you stare at us with that cute expression.....!?)

“Despite the results becoming like this, with this the champion for the heroine group is Camus!”

"Everyone, thank you. With your overflowing support.... I will do my best. And as Hiiro's subordinate...too." (Camus)

Camus smiles sweetly.

Everyone: (Is he really a guy?)

"Alright, the next agenda of the event is the character ranking. Due to certain reasons, we are going to jump towards the fifth place!" (Arnold)

"Nofofof! The heroine section took a lot of our delicate printing paper after all." (Silva)

"Shut up old man! Those things should be off-record you know!" (Arnold)

"Please stop Oji-san! For now, calm down! Ah, before that, here you go readers!" (Muir)

One Vote

Aoyama Taishi

Rudolf

Mikku

Teckil

Grayald

Yukihito

Tenn

Lion Liger

Two Votes

Nikki

Mikazuki

Kiria 3

Eunice

Three Votes

Liliyn

Mimiru

Hime

Yukiona

Four Votes

Ornoth

Tomoto Sui

Five Votes

Muir

Shamoe

Shublarz

Crouch

Rarashik

Six Votes

Aquinas

Seven Votes

Eveam

“I see. Hm? Wait a minute. Did I get zero points?” (Arnold)

“I-it’s alrigh Oji-san! There are still five places left!” (Muir)

“Thanks for concern Muir. But if I’m not there, I don’t think I can hold on...”
(Arnold)

“Haha (Wry laugh)....” (Muir)

“Arnold-dono, we still have hope for our futures! It’s just starting! Have faith!
We will definitely be amongst the top 5!” (Silva)

“Old man.... Alright, I’ll trust those words!” (Arnold)

“Well then, let’s immediately announce the next candidate! Representing the
5th place with 9 votes.....oh? It’s Arnold-dono.” (Silva)

“Ah?.....Eh? Me?” (Arnold)

“It appears to be so.” (Silva)

“Yahooooooooooooo!” (Arnold)

“Isn’t that great Arnold-dono? You have so many fans.” (Silva)

“Nahahaha! If it’s this result, I can say it without holding back anymore! Thanks guys! Not because of the heroine ranking, but cuz of this! Yahoooooooooo!” (Arnold)

“Fufu, congratulations Ojisan.” (Muir)

“Ah, thanks! Let’s keep this vibe going! Representing the 4th place with 15 votes is The number-one guy you can rely on! He’s a unique guild master who also has the disposition to be a king! And that person is Judom Lankaaaaaars!” (Arnold)

“Oh? Me? I see. Since you have sincerely voted for me, it’s natural that I have the obligation to answer your expectations. (Ehem) I swear with own life that I will fight for the sake of the people who voted for me until this life of mine expires! Thank you everyone!” (Judom)

“Fua~ he’s such a big person.” (Muir)

“I agree with your opinion. Not only is his body big, his ambience as well too.” (Mimiru)

“Also....he’s strong.” (Eunice)

“I know right? I also admire to become a guy like that someday.....anyway! Let’s proceed! Representing the 3rd place with 17 votes.....is the innocent sand user! The son of a man who looks like girl but he isn’t! And the one who possesses an unshaken loyalty towards Hiiro! That person is Camuuuuuuuuuuuuus!” (Arnold)

“Un....I did it. Will Hiiro...praise me?” (Camus)

“Uuuu... Camus is too strong.” (Muir)

“We won’t lose to him Muir-chan!” (Mimiru)

“.....I won’t lose.” (Eunice)

“Nofofof! Hiiro-sama is so popular!” (Silva)

“Tsk... even though he’s being admired by so many beautiful girls, and that unsociable prick doesn’t even.... Muir is the only person I won’t pass to you Hiiroooooo!” (Arnold)

“Everyone, thank you. Arnold. Next?” (Camus)

“I understand! This person received a favorable number of 27 votes in total! Representing the 2nd place is..... This walking pervert besides me! The Feminist Butler! A person who sees the world more deeply than the rest of us and has an outstanding knowledge of the world’s history. That person is Silva Purutiiiiiiiiiiiiis!” (Arnold)

“Nof!” (Silva)

“I understand the laughter, but say something at least!” (Arnold)

“Nofofof! I was overcome by my own feelings that I couldn’t help it! Nofofofofo!” (Silva)

“Err, like I said, at least please say a few words or something?” (Arnold)

“A few words I see. Ehem! Well then.... If I’m pushed to say, whether they have huge breast or well-shaped breasts, beautiful or cute, any of them would make me very excited. Moreover, about the elasticity and shape of the brea—” (Silva)

“W-w-w-WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU SAYING!” (Arnold)

“What seems to be the problem?” (Silva)

“Don’t pretend you don’t know the reason! What the heck were those vulgar words!” (Arnold)

“As you have requested, a few words from me.” (Silva)

“That’s omitted! Is there anything else you want to say Hentai geezer!” (Arnold)

“Mumumu! If that’s the case! To tell you the truth, I prefer those who are gentler in bed, but it doesn’t mean I don’t like those who are intens—” (Silva)

"Stoooop! Alright this conversation ends!" (Arnold)

"Nofofof! What a disappointment! Nofofof!" (SIlva)

Liliyn: (That idiot, it's obvious that he's embarrassed.)

"Well then, let's proceed to the character that reigns over all the characters in this story! Moreover, this person acquired a whopping number of 115 votes! A perfect victory! And this person is.....meh, just make that guy appear already! Oi they are calling you!" (Arnold)

.....?

"That's strange. Where is that guy?" (Arnold)

"I don't know as well." (Muir)

"Damn it! Anyway, let's look for that guy!" (Arnold)

After 30 minutes....

"Good grief, why did you leave and went to eat a meal! Haven't I told you that this event is special and that you should stay until this is over!" (Arnold)

"Humph, it can't be helped. I got hungry." (????)

"Aaggh! I have enough of this! What are you a kid!?anyway, it's to introduce our first placer! The best character of the first popularity voting poll of this series! The my-pace food gourmet and book-obsessed guy! Arrogant-like-demon human! And the non-standard cheat! This person is!"

Hiiro Okamuraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!" (Arnold)

"Yawn, I feel sleepy." (Hiiro)

"Can't you understand that you are the leading part of this event!" (Arnold)

"Annoying. Shut your mouth." (Hiiro)

『Silence』|『沈黙』character was shot at Arnold

"————— !? " (Arnold)

Everyone: "....."

"Ah, I think there was a book I was supposed to read today. May I go already?" (Hiiro)

"E-errr.... Hiiro-san. Is there anything you would like to say to them? The readers have invested their precious time to vote for you after all." (Muir)

"..... I never asked for them to do this though?" (Hiiro)

"....Hiiro-san is Hiiro-san after all. No matter where." (Muir)

"Fufu, indeed." (Mimiru)

".....that's so like onii-chan." (Eunice)

"Haha, that kind isn't interested in these sort of events anyway." (Liliyn)

"Fuooooo! Shishou was so coooool!" (Nikki)

"Masteeeeeeeer~! Mikazuki was, Mikazuki made it to the list you know! Praise me praise me!" (Mikazuki)

"AH! I found Hiiro! This time I won't let you get away!" (Crouch)

"Hiiro! It's very important to express your gratitude to these people!" (Eveam)

"Ah, this is becoming noisy. Seriously..." (Hiiro)

Unexpectedly Hiiro executed the character he wrote. Then, everyone's expression became calm and soon after, all of them expressed their brightest smiles and bowed politely in the end.

"Thank you for participating in the voting poll! " (Female Group)

"Haa, with this, it's back to normal." (Hiiro)

The character Hiiro wrote with his finger was 『Deep Gratitude』 | 『感謝感激』

",,,best regards after this." (Hiiro)

"Hiiro is first place, I'm first place..... ehehehe" (Camus)

Everyone excluding the two: ".....HA!?"

Chapter 229 - From Piercer to Slasher

A tragedy assaulted him. In those chaotic times, some thieves were able to steal his creations, and with the very weapons of war he made by his own bare hands, he was deprived of his family.

No matter how insignificant a person is, even if he or she is a lowly thief, if he or she were to wield such a weapon, calamity would be easy to bring.

Cruzer's parents who didn't expect such a thing happening were murdered, and by his assassin dagger, his wife was also.....

What was left apart from him was his young child, the only blessing from him and his wife's love. He despaired. To the weapons he produced with pure love, to take away his beloved.

Even that, the country still pressed him to make even stronger weapons. If he were to leave this situation as it is, not only him, but his young child will face danger. He who thought so left him* in his wife's younger sister, and finally decided to part himself from him. In order to protect his child until he grows up he made one spear on this occasion.

Then he went around the world and collected the weapons he had made whenever he saw them. However, the pursuers multiplied even more, and after a long wild goose chase, he finally settled down in this Shanjumon Cave.

She has heard this story from him before, but everyone on her back felt the grief he's shouldering and fell silent.

"Cruzer-dono, right? Like we've mentioned before, there is this one boy who took all our interest"

"Eh?Ah, that reminds me, you have said something like that before, Silva-san"

To the dark atmosphere, Silva moved his mouth with a smile.

Yes, who is very surprisingly, milady here have fallen in love with"
"Fufufufallen you say!? Wha-wawawawawhat are you talking about you pervert!"

In the speech which made her astonished, she denied with all her might.

"I-Im not with that moron! Something like falling in love! Wh-why must I hold feelings to an insensitive blockhead like Hiiro?!"

"Ooh? But I didn't say it was Hiiro-sama"

As Silva's face broke into a vulgar grin, blood goes up the head of Lilyn in an instant.

"Eei! Take it back! Listen Silva. That guy is my subordinate, no more, no less. Get it!?"

She grasped him by the neck and strangled him grandly, but it seems he doesn't mind, or more than that, he looks happy.

"Nofofofofo! Looks like milady who is always not honest with her true feelings is quite honest right now~ Nofofofofo!"

"Eeei shut it you misunderstanding perverted butler!"

"Nofofofofo!"

Cruzer, taken aback at the sudden situation, Shamoe going "Fueeee!" of as usual, and Mikadzuchi in her human form before everyone is aware, tilting her head unable to grasp what's happening.

Silva who doesn't change his attitude no matter how you persuade, though he's given a glare while running out of breath, his expression didn't collapse at all.

"It's frightening, milady"

"Hmph! Why is this pervert using your vision to someone's mind at times like this.....?"

"But milady..."

"I'll teach you a lesson later.....Huh?"

Being interrupted at the middle, she blurted out.

"What if it happens?"

"Huh? What are you.....?"

"What if, Hiiro-sama is with a woman right now, walking affectionately with

them as it is?"

"Fuu, what are you saying? A woman who walks alongside Hiiro affectionately does not exist!"

She stuck her flat chest in pride with quite an impact, you can imagine the explosion from behind her.

"I'm afraid not, milady. In fact, the other day I caught sight of Hiiro-sama sandwiched in between Eveam-dono and Shublarz-dono and seems to be enjoying them....."

"What!? Dong such thing! So its breasts, huh! That guy cannot oppose breasts after all!"

As she caught the neck of Silva and strangled him again,

"Nofofofofo! Oh yeah, Aquinas-dono and Marione-dono also came too"

"....."

Yes Captain! We have spotted newly arrived ships entering the battle!... It's SS Aquinas and SS Marione! And as if they're spectating, SS Ornorth is also here! And we're continuously being bombarded by SS Eveam and SS Shublarz! They're approaching with a pincer attack!!!

Men, prepare for counterstrike! We have won and claimed this Hiiro Seas once, and it will be another stormy battle on the next, but we will stand firm! Hold the Line! SINK THEM TO DAVY JONES' LOCKER! PREPARE THE TRAPEDOES!)

Silva was blown away with an uppercut.

"Die!"

"Buhaaa!?"

Silva was blown away with an uppercut.

"Haaaa haaaah..... Good grief, how idiotic can you be! Eei! Die, die!"

The master kicking the butler who made fun of her hard. Cruzer could only stare wide-eyed the scenery.

"I-it's quite surprising, really. Lilyn-san, you sure are quite nasty....."

"Huh? What? You punk want a piece of this too?"

With twitching cheeks and piercing glare, she waved her fist at Cruzer.

“N-no thanks. However.....You seem to be quite happy, Silva-san”

“Of course, this pain is already pleasure for someone like me”

For him to say it readily even with a bleeding eye and nose, Lilyn dropped her shoulders in amazement.

“Really, How much will it take to kill this dunce.....”

Whatever she did, he revives immediately. This man is truly an incantation of immortality.

“Well, because of that, this gag has become a part-time for me”

“A gag part-time job? What are you talking about you masochistic birdbrain? In the end, even the head..... wait, isn’t his head strange in the first place?

“Nofofofofo! That is quite savage, milady! But a savage milady is also what I yearn for~!”

“Eeei, don’t come near me! Disgusting!”

She kicked Silva struggling to cling to her more.

“Fufufu..... as expected of Silva-sama”

“Mu? Did you say something, Shamoe?”

“Nno, it’s nothing! I-I-I-I didn’t say anything!”

The place which was a floating dark cloud until now became bright completely. This was Silva’s aim after all. Also, though this is not certain, Lilyn somehow noticed it and participated. Due to being acquainted with them for a long time, she understood. No, she must have understood him in the first place.

After the hectic exchange which lasted for a while, as they spent their tea time together,

“Uhmm..... so what story are we talking about again?”

It is natural for Cruzer to ask. The talk was derailed too much.

“Ehem! Well, it’s a story of a boy named Hiiro”

“Ahh, that’s right”

He nodded in assent as he recalled. Because his beast ears twitched slightly,

Lilyn thought of it to be pretty cute.

"A boy named Hiiro. You talked only a little about him when you went here previously, right?"

Yes. As soon as Lilyn came to the Demon Country Xaos, she went to Cruzer's whereabouts immediately. Before, Hiiro told him he doesn't want to go because it's troublesome so she had no choice but to leave him for a week.

"Was there something about that boy?"

"To tell you the truth, it's what in his hand"

"What do you mean?"

It is.....one of Cruzer's creations"

"....."

The smile on Silva's face vanished, and was replaced with a serious expression.

"Frankly speaking, though it has changed a little from its original due to circumstances, it was surely the Piercing Blade・Tsuranuki"

"Oh.....so it's that child....."

He closed his eyes to recall, and opened it again and stared at Silva.

"That child is one of those prototypes that I've created in order to produce certain swords. Even though I call it a prototype, it's an excellent child, so I say. So, what about that child?"

"Right now, it has been renamed to Rending Blade・Zangeki"

"....Eh?"

He stared wide-eyed in surprise, unable to comprehend.

"W-wait a minute. From Tsuranuki (Piercer) to Zangeki (Slasher)? The name changed? Impossible. As far as I know, they are separate entities, and I have entrusted Slasher to a certain person. What on Edea happened?"

With a slight delay, Silva spoke.

"Well, we looked around the Demon country for half a hear"

"Yes, I heard about that. Honestly, I was surprised that you moved out of your castle....."

"Right? That reminds me, it was in that castle that milady and Cruzer met for the first time"

"Hmph, to even refuse my invitation at that time..."

Pouting in dissatisfaction, Cruzer could only give her a bitter smile. Well, they not pursuing further why he is hiding yet inviting him to live there will surely make him insecure.

"Getting back to the main topic, we met a certain person during this mid-year"

"A certain person?"

"Yes. Zaft-dono, a master blacksmith"

"Zaft-Zaft, you say!?"

He repeated himself to clarify, but Silva himself agreed.

"Yes. I heard from him that he was your disciple"

Cruzer narrowed his eyes and looked down.

"Disciple.....disciple, is it? It's true that I gave preliminary lessons to him, but it's just the basics"

Such story is heard.

When Cruzer was touring around the world, he set foot on the Demon Country. There, he met a young'un named Zaft. He was aiming to be a master blacksmith, too, but did a big failure and got depressed, or so he said.

For Cruzer whose passion was lost as a master blacksmith, being dazed by the passion of this person, he taught him the basics of blacksmithing in kindness on impulse.

He's like a dry sponge, and only within approximately one week, he is now on the levels of one of the best.

"He said the basics you taught were very easy to understand, and it contributed greatly to what he is now, or so he said"

".....is that so"

He's like a child shyly scratching his cheeks in embarrassment. Even though he's not formally his pupil, he doesn't feel bad.

“It was Zaft-dono who transformed it into Zangeki”

“I see. I had handed it to him when we parted ways. It’s the reward for trying his best for that one week. I thought that if it’s him, he won’t treat that child as if it’s nothing. But if I’m not mistaken, Slasher is supposed to have ended its role and can’t be used anymore”

Like he said, Rending Blade·Zangeki was broken at the middle, so it cannot be used as a sword anymore.

“When I found that child, it was already in such state. I wanted to carry and bury it in a secure place, but Zaft wanted that child”

Therefore he gave it as a reward, to not hurt that person.

“It’s just what Cruzer-dono said. But because of that, Zaft-dono wanted it to be revived”

“Eh?”

“I want to catch up to my teacher and make him recognize me. So by these hands, I’ll bring back this sword that died back to life again”

“.....Zaft said such things? No, that would be difficult. That child is the completed form of a prototype as I said a while ago. No matter how good his arms are, it is impossible for him to bring it to life again without it. Using the materials to make a common sword even.....ah”

As he saw the face of Silva, he noticed. Silva nods again to answer that.

“Hiiro-sama has also come with us. And in his arms is the prototype Tsuranuki you made”

“.....was it really combined?”

He arrived at that answer, not hiding is surprise.

Yes. They happened to pass the neighborhood by chance, and Zaft who saw the Piercing Blade·Tsuranuki entreated Hiiro to rebuild the Rending Blade·Zangeki by all means.

However, Hiiro didn’t like to leave the sword to someone whom he doesn’t know well and declined from the beginning. After begging over and over again, Hiiro stated a condition of showing his arms first.

Then Zaft brought Hiiro to his atelier, where the view of various swords mixed in there should impress him. Various kinds of katana were displayed there.

Though Hiiro had seen a lot of swords already, he haven't seen those of katana designs that much, and in contrast to Lilyn doesn't care too much about them, Hiiro is especially charmed by the characteristic of the katana and thus, he was nodding in satisfaction to the articles displayed.

All the swords are surely well-made. Still, they didn't pass on the category of what Hiiro is looking for. However, that's until Zaft brought the Rending Blade·Zangeki over.

Hiiro who saw it was fascinated even though it is broken. This only shows that he clearly liked it.

He liked to see the sword being revived by all means. When he told that the katana will be repaired if he were to offer the sword, Hiiro accepted it readily.

Considerable time is needed to make the katana. But the two swords synthesized magnificently, and thus, the Rending Blade·Zangeki was reborn.

Silva asked whether it is really okay for him to part with the katana, but he just gave one condition upon handing the sword. Besides, he was already satisfied of being able to make such a sword.

And the only condition is: If they were to meet Cruzer again, he wants him to show the katana to him.

And this is why we're here, Cruzer-dono. Thank you very much, he said"
".....He became such a splendid master blacksmith, eh"

Was he deeply moved? Cruzer stared his eyes in a distance. However, that deep emotion was frozen in his following words.

"Thanks to that katana, Hiiro-sama has brought victory to the duel with the Gabranth"

"Zangeki was used for war?"

It changed completely and now, he glared at Silva with a harsh look.

Chapter 230 - Enemy Spirit

[Liliyn's POV]

At the time Cruzer glared Silva for answers, an explosion occurred within the cave. Then, the earth shook as splinters fell from the muddy ceiling of the cave.

“What’s happening?” (Liliyn)

Liliyn glanced at the path leading to the exit of this cave with a suspicious expression and said,

“Monsters?” (Liliyn)

“No, that’s impossible, no monster in this area would do something like destroying their natural habitat. That kind of explosion wasn’t caused by monsters.” (Cruzer)

The one who answered was Cruzer who was well-informed about the **【Shanjumon Cave】**

“Hou, this has become interesting. So you mean to say that other than us, there were other curious people who have set foot in this cave?” (Liliyn)

“.....I fear that’s likely true.” (Cruzer)

“..... if that’s the case, the problem is why and for what purpose did they come here. I do have an idea though....” (Liliyn)

When she turned her eyes towards Cruzer, he refused the accusing gaze.

“It’s not me.” (Cruzer)

“Hou, what’s your basis?” (Liliyn)

“Whenever I go out, I always wear a disguise, and even when I return back, I always take more than enough precaution.” (Cruzer)

“I see, if there was someone capable of exceeding your stealth skills, this problem could have been solved already.” (Liliyn)

If someone like Hiiro who could multi-use the characters:『Transparency』|『透明』 & 『Invisibility』|『隱形』, then Cruzer wouldn’t be able to see them, much

less, to notice them. Furthermore, if such person was able to do it, then he's not just an ordinary spy.

Although Cruzer also was not an ordinary man, it would still be difficult to track him who specializes in covert.

"That could be true. However, there might be another reason." (Silva)

"What?" (Liliyn)

"Based on the sound earlier, these people may be fighting a monster, however, if I was in their position, I would find a gentler method to do it considering our purpose in here. They were not hiding their presence or even taking heed of their actions. These people are not spies in my opinion." (Silva)

In other words, even if someone has come here, their purpose was not Cruzer. Liliyn also agreed to this thought.

"Besides, even if I was being tailed, I who's always serious in covert operations won't be noticed that easily." (Cruzer)

".....come to think of it, you were always like that, huh?" (Liliyn)

Cruzer's words were not conceited. Certainly, it's impossible to track him down because he was a person who never failed to take precaution in their travels. As long as it's not on the same level of Hiiro's foul-playing magic.....

"Then for what purpose....ah, there was one in here." (Liliyn)

"What do you mean?" (Cruzer)

"I will be able to confirm it if we meet our mysterious intruders." (Liliyn)

Liliyn's expression curved into a smile that seems to say "this is going to be fun" and stood up. Along with her, Silva also stood up similarly.

"Shamoe, and Mi....ah, she's asleep." (Liliyn)

She caught the figure of Mikazuki sleeping on Shamoe's lap.

"Both of you stay here for a bit." (Liliyn)

"I-I understand." (Shamoe)

Shamoe responded with a quiet voice, taking into consideration of Mikazuki's

sleeping figure.

“Let’s go Silva.” (Liliyn)

“Certainly Milady.” (Silva)

Silva walks in front of Liliyn as if to say “I’m Milady’s shield anytime.”

“What should I do?” (Cruzer)

“Do as you see fit.... but if by any chance the intruders were really aiming at you, hide here with Shamoe and the others.” (Liliyn)

“.....if you say so.” (Cruzer)

“I’ll come back soon after I question those intruders for information. But, if they still feign ignorance about their intrusion, it might become a little bit rough. Kukuku.” (Liliyn)

The gloomy atmosphere she felt after arriving in this place vanished. Though she wasn’t sure of their purpose in here,

(I guess I can pass off my boredom with them)

They went out of place while Liliyn was expecting to be amused a little.

Covering most of the surrounding area were corpses of Blood Ants. These monsters that have a similar size to a 10 years old human child, attacks in swarms which rated them as rank A difficulty.

The corpse had its limbs and hands cut off completely as if the corpse had been subjected to a destructive explosion as blood were scattered all over the place.

And two figures remained in those surroundings. Those two wore jet-black robes on their bodies with some blood staining their clothes.

“Even though they were small fries, they still attacked us. What weak monsters!” (???)

One of the two had a large build that was casually spewing off a violent mood. Apparently, this person seems to be the criminal offender who did this to the Blood Ants.

Liliyn slowly peeked from the hole they were in. However,

“.....we are being observed by someone.” (???)

The other of the two spoke with his child-like figure,

“Ha? No one told us that there would be people here. Where are they?” (???)

The large one who hasn't noticed them looks around restlessly. However, when the small one shifted their direction towards their location, he threw out something from his chest.

Kiiin!

“See...There they are.” (???)

The small guy muttered those confident words as if they had been played by his earlier attack. He threw a dagger towards them as Silva repelled it by throwing a kitchen knife from his.

It couldn't be helped if their whereabouts were easily discovered but,

(I wanted to collect a little more information from their talk earlier)

Liliyn and Silva appeared in front of two black-robed people.

“Hah? What's a brat doing in this place?” (???)

(TL Note: Yup. He just raised his death flag)

Surprising words came from the large man earlier, but

“Don't you know that this ‘brat’ is going to train that mouth of yours right now?” (Liliyn)

“Hah? Oi, do you understand what this brat is blubbering about?” (???)

The large guy wasn't taking Liliyn's words seriously as a mocking snicker soon followed his words.

“Be quiet Iraora. She's the person who wounded Kainabi you know? I remember it clearly because I was there too.” (???)

As he was rebuked by the small companions of his, Iraora clicked his tongue.

“That time? You mean that woman who kicked Kainabi, that woman?”
(Iraora)

“Exactly. She had not participated in the duel so it's natural that you may not

know of her, but this person is the younger sister of Aquinas.” (???)

“.... Aquinas?” (Iraora)

Iraora then glared at Liliyn with suspicious eyes. However, Liliyn did her best not to reveal the surprise on her face.

(Is that guy somehow related to my blood family....? No, that's not possible. These men were also the same black-robed people at that time. So that means they are Predecessor Demon Lord Avoros' subordinates. This development is getting better and better.....)

Even if their blood relation was kept with minimum secrecy, Avoros would most likely find out the truth about it easily. If that's the case, then he might also have information about her private life. Let's hope this doesn't become troublesome in the future.

(Avoros.....I really can't understand that person....)

While Liliyn was thinking of such things, the small companion of Iraora supplemented additional information of her.

“That girl is known as the 《Red Rose Witch》. Her strength is probably on the same level as Aquinas.” (???)

“Hee, this brat is that strong, huh? But no matter how I see it this brat is still a just a baby!” (Iraora)

Liliyn was having a hard time containing her anger from Iraora's rude behavior. When she was about to hit him for the time being, someone quietly touched her by the shoulders.

“Milady, please leave this one to me.” (Silva)

Silva walked forward without hearing her answer.

“Oh my. This is quite a coincidence. I'm honored to meet you again... Doushi-dono?” (Silva)

(TL note: 同士 (read as Doushi) means fellow/comrade/companion. In this case, it would fellow-race or fellow-kin. In other words, a Spirit like Silva)

“.....” (Fellow-kin?)

Silva lightly dipped her heads downwards as a show of courtesy to the small companion of Iraora.

"That said, weren't you too rude with my master earlier?" (Silva)

The small companion seems to have noticed something and instantly calls out to his companion.

"Runaway from there Iraora!" (Fellow-kin?)

"Hah?" (Iraora)

However, it was too late. A black pool crept out from the foothold of the two people, the small guy was able to avoid it with a safe margin, but Iraora's body was wrapped by that blackness.

"O-oi. what the heck is this....!?" (Iraora)

It seemed impossible to move for Iraora as his body was covered by that black substance.

".....Pool Ball." (Silva)

At the mention of that name, a black, round object manifested in Silva's hands and instantaneously shot it towards the snared Iraora. The ball moved at a tremendous speed and,

Dogaan!

It splendidly hit his belly.

"Guhaa!?" (Iraora)

Iraora vomited blood as his expression warped from a ragged look.

"Will you pardon me if I would be the one who will gladly discipline that bad mouth of yours, no?" (Silva)

It was not Silva's usual smile, but a sneer that contained hostility and blood thirst. Then Liliyn shifted her glance to the small companion of Iraora,

"Hey Silva, you said fellow-kin right? You mean this guy?" (Liliyn)

"Indeed Milady. Even if he was concealing his appearance with a robe, I can feel it..... You understand right? That we are a similar existence..... a 『Spirit』

to be exact. " (Silva)

"....." (Fellow-kin)

However, before the person could answer,

"Uraaaaaaaaaaa!" (Iraora)

"Oh my!?" (Silva)

Though Iraora was being restrained by Silva's dark magic, surprisingly Iraora tore it off with all of his strength and broke from its captivity.

And when Iraora stripped off his robe,

"Oi Abyss, I can kill these people right?" (Iraora)

Iraora clarified his companion with a stern face. It seemed to be painted with wild excitement and anger that would jump at any second at them.

"Like I said before, don't rage in here. How will you take responsibility if we lose requested item?" (Abyss)

It seemed that Iraora was the cause of the massacre of the Blood Ants based from his performance earlier. However, he was sharply rebuked by his Abyss again.

"Ku....b-but." (Iraora)

He was looking at Abyss as if he was not satisfied with that kind of explanation. Following that grinding sounds could be heard from him.

"Keep your mouth shut. I'll deal with this." (Abyss)

Abyss gazed at Silva after saying those words.

"....you said fellow-kin....right?" (Abyss)

"I did, yes." (Silva)

"....I had no intention to hide my identity using this robe, but this is just insurance." (Abyss)

As he said so, he folded his hood. Liliyn who saw that leaked an admiring voice, "Hou~"

(Fumu, he is certainly the same as Silva)

In other words, this person was a 『Spirit』, moreover, a humanoid type. His physical look seems considerably young compared to Silva. Although Hiiro will likely treat him indifferently.

He had long-slit eyes, slender jaw, and silky jet-black hair. And for some reason, he had Hiiro's unfriendly expression somehow.

(That guy also had black hair.... Well at least, I like this guy's face better)

Certainly, if judged based on his looks, aside from being taller than her, he possesses a feminine handsome face. She felt a bit guilty when she thought of beating this person a little.

However, Liliyn felt that his cold expression didn't have any grace of showing a smile. It was as if his expression lacked any emotion.

"Abyss-dono... is this good to call you with?" (Silva)

"Sure, yours is Silva, right?" (Abyss)

"It is..." (Silva)

Because Silva was quietly watching Abyss, the latter asks the meaning of his actions. But Silva spoke first while partly closing one of his eyes.

"As I thought.... You are also a 『Dark Spirit』right?" (Silva)

"....so that means you really did notice at that time." (Abyss)

The time Abyss was talking about appears to be the duel incident.

"Then I'll introduce again myself. I'm Abyss of 『Matar Deus』!" (Abyss)

"Mine's Iraora!" (Iraora)

"....if I'm not mistaken, that large dickhead over there was the traitor of 『Evila』 from the previous war, right?" (Liliyn)

"Hou, so I'm that famous, huh?" (Iraora)

Seeing such a hearty smile, Liliyn could only show her displeasure about it. This person seems to have a screw loose on his head if he can make such an expression despite being denounced to treachery.

During the previous war, Iraora was a general tasked in guarding one of the

only bridges connecting the Humas and Evila continents. His strength was comparable to the Demon Lord's personal army, the Cruel Division.

No, that might not be. There should be another guard along with him, 《Cruel》 6th rank, Greyald, and he was killed too easily. He might not be an ordinary enemy after all.

"But being falsely accused of betrayal is kind of rude you know? That's because from the beginning I was serving my one and only master! And it's not that weak-willed lass those people serve on." (Iraora)

Though Eveam's reputation was being bad-mouthed right now, because Liliyn didn't have any special reason to defend the woman, she didn't respond to that.

"So? What does your master hope by sending you people in here? What's your purpose for coming here?" (Liliyn)

"And if we don't answer?" (Abyss)

Abyss nonchalantly answered her questions. However, she anticipated this much for their answer. That's because all of them were mutual enemies at war with each other. Rather, it was Leowald and Eveam who accurately waged war on Avoros. Though Liliyn was not directly involved with them, she knew that she couldn't let these people do what they want for the sake of her future movements.

"So I guess I will have to force those information out of you people then?" (Liliyn)

Liliyn released a dreadful aura that shook the surrounding atmosphere. Iraora's expression that was mocking them a little while ago, lost its composure.

"This guy..... So she wasn't a brat after all?" (Iraora)

"I told you right? And it's not just her, that man beside her is considerably strong too. I may not know their abilities. So we probably are somewhat at a disadvantage?" (Abyss)

"Hah? What are you bickering about! Isn't it great there is someone who can release that kind of pressure in here!" (Iraora)

However, in contrast to his companions' enthusiasm, Abyss responded with a sigh.

"Like I said, you can't rampage in this place. How will you apologize to His Majesty if we couldn't obtain it?" (Abyss)

"Ku... the heck is this. Damn it..." (Iraora)

"However, the other side can do that without care. Fighting them is too risky."
" (Abyss)

Abyss observed the surroundings and discovered something that got his attention.

"...Iraora" (Abyss)

"What?" (Iraora)

"Look over there." (Abyss)

"Hah?" (Iraora)

"Use that." (Abyss)

".....I see." (Iraora)

The corners of Iraora's mouth raised up, and he immediately rushed into action. He grabbed one of the corpses lying around and threw it towards Liliyn.

"Disappear you hindrances!" (Liliyn)

When the corpse reached her, Liliyn lightly brought her hands downward and split the corpse in half.

However, the figures of the enemies disappeared before her very eyes,

"Milady, they are over there!" (Silva)

The direction that Silva had indicated to was towards above. These were tunnels used by many Blood Ants. Then, Iraora began to cry out suddenly.

Liliyn frowned at the tremendous roaring voice of Iraora. While she was trying to understand the significance of that action, the muddy walls trembled, and one after another, numerous Blood Ants fell from the many holes

(I see! That yell was made to summon those monsters from the nest!)

It was like a rain of ants. Furthermore, the yell wasn't just used to summon them from their nest, it also incited the anger of these monsters. The rain seemed endless as there was no limit to their numbers. The way things are going these monster might soon block the passages of this area.

"This way, hurry!" (Cruzer)

Cruzer seemed to have used one of the holes as his entrance to this area. It seemed impossible now to track those people in this kind of situation.

"It can't be helped! We're returning Silva!" (Liliyn)

"Yes, Milady!" (Silva)

They ran towards the tunnel Cruzer was in.

[Abyss POV]

Iraora chuckled as he saw Liliyn return among one the tunnels of this area.

"Your plan seemed to have worked." (Iraora)

"Yeah. I was fortunate enough to notice the signs of demons on those holes. Good thing the nest was among those tunnels." (Abyss)

"Should I say 'as expected of a 『Spirit』' ? Ah, but that old man was also a 『Dark Spirit』 like you right? Do you know him?" (Iraora)

"These kinds of things are just trivial matters. Our duty right now is to search the requested item by His Majesty." (Abyss)

"Yeah you're right. But do you know the exact location of it?" (Iraora)

Abyss silently gazed at one of the holes of the area, and then he wore his hood again.

"This way. Follow me." (Abyss)

"Yeah yeah I know. But don't boss me around!" (Iraora)

"Then if you get lost along the way, I won't bother looking for you. Do you want that?" (Abyss)

Iraora stiffened from his remarks and inadvertently clicked his tongue.

"Damn it, then find that place quickly." (Iraora)

"Sure." (Abyss)

Although Abyss said that, there was a slight anxiousness in his thoughts. It was about that man who called over Liliyn and her companion.

(His face seems familiar....no, that's just my imagination. It shouldn't be possible)

He abandoned such thoughts, although it took him a while to forget the Deja Vu. They have a more important task to do right now.

The two people disappeared inside the dark hole.

Chapter 231 - The Core of the Founder Demon Lord

Liliyn POV

“You have my gratitude, Cruzer-dono.” (Silva)

Even though Silva was an all-seeing existence to be feared, he bowed in front of Cruzer in gratitude for helping their escape.

“Please don’t worry. If by any chance Liliyn-san’s warning was true, I would have troubled you either way.” (Cruzer)

Cruzer also similarly bowed with the same degree of gratitude.

“And apparently, they didn’t seem to be looking for me.” (Cruzer)

His relief was obvious as his expression loosened. Liliyn didn’t probe any further about it.

“Oi Cruzer, you’re well informed about this place right? I have one question about it” (Liliyn)

“....it’s about their purpose, isn’t it?” (Cruzer)

Cruzer seemed to have anticipated her question.

“As far as that goes, didn’t those people slipped a few words related to their purpose in this place?” (Silva)

“Yeah they did. I thought the reason why they set their foot in this secluded place was to search for Cruzer, but” (Liliyn)

Those people seemed to know what they were doing.

“They don’t seem to be. Rather..... They seem to be looking for some treasure sleeping inside this cave.” (Liliyn)

“.....” (Cruzer)

Cruzer kept silent with his eyes partly closed. He placed a hand on his chins as he pondered about Liliyn’s words. Because of such actions, Liliyn noticed him

and awaited for his response.

“....I see, it can’t be helped to have such conclusion. No one would visit this place with only sightseeing as their intentions.” (Cruzer)

It apparently seems that Cruzer as well arrived with the same conclusion as them.

“That’s why if you know anything here that could help us, say it now. If what they are looking do exist, then we have to stop them in finding that treasure first.” (Liliyn)

“If you say it like that, I will cooperate. However, I’m not that detailed about this, alright? This is only based on what I’ve seen, so I have no knowledge regarding as to why or how it got here.” (Cruzer)

And so Cruzer spoke about the treasure sleeping inside the 【Shanjuumon Cave】

A long time ago, this cave was just a usual cave. It was said to be a hiding place of a Demon Lord. This person had placed a mysterious force that prevents intruders from invading it using an unknown high-level magic.

TL Note: (Please note that this Demon Lord is not Eveam. I know who it is, but consider this one as some other Demon Lord in the past.)

In other words, an optical illusion magic that changes interior of the cave every time an intruder enters.

“Impossible! I was fooled by a magic that I was specialised in!” (Liliyn)

Liliyn’s unique magic was called 《Fantasia Magic》, a magic that spites illusions towards selected enemies while the caster is unaffected by it.

Of course, she knew that there were other people out there who uses a similar magic, however even if they could use it, at the very least, it shouldn’t have worked on her. Liliyn’s sixth sense would have instantly told her and see through the illusions.

So Liliyn couldn’t entirely believe this baseless rumors that she was deceived by such magic. But she still couldn’t escape the illusion even if she was trying to breakthrough the magic. If she used her magic, her sixth sense should have

already told her where that treasure was located.

Liliyn did not expect that there was a magic existing beyond her unique magic. This was making her conflicted.

"I understand how unbelievable this seems, Liliyn-san. I do believe that your 『Fantasia Magic』is the only one that exists in this world. And it's very strong so to speak." (Cruzer)

She pouted as if to say "That's natural. It's my unique magic."

"However, if you know what kind of treasure is sleeping in this cave, I'm sure you will also agree with me." (Cruzer)

".....what do you mean?" (Liliyn)

Cruzer paused for a bit, and began to speak in a deep quiet voice.

"The treasure that lies inside the 『Shanjuumon Cave』 is..... the 『The Core of the Founder Demon Lord』"

(Eh? Did I hear that correctly..? He..he said the core of the Founder.... Demon Lord?)

Liliyn instinctively asked Cruzer again to confirm if she heard those words correctly.

"Like I said a while ago, the treasure that lies in this place is the core of the person who founded 【Xaous】kingdom.... Demon Lord Adams." (Cruzer)

Liliyn grinded her teeth unintentionally. Her arms trembled as she made a fist.

"You understand right? No, you may have already arrived at what I'm trying to point out. Because Adams specialises in a unique magic as well.... I'm pretty sure you are aware of that, am I right Liliyn-san?" (Cruzer)

"....." (Liliyn)

(TL Note: The author used 彼女 | Kanojo. This means Adams is a woman.)

(Of course I know.... Because that Adams is.....)

"She was renowned to be the strongest Demon Lord who reigned over anyone. Her magic too made her known as the 『Queen of Dreams』because that magic was..... 『Fantasia Magic』. Yes, she was the 『Succubus-kin』 whom

Liliyn-san inherited her unique magic.” (Cruzer)

(TL Note: 夢魔族 means Dream-Demon Kin. So it can either be an Incubus or Succubus.)

Silva who knew this quietly watched the conversation of the two people. Liliyn who had a face that won't recognise this rumor, glared at Cruzer.

She stared at him for awhile, until she leaked a exasperated sigh. His eyes wasn't lying.

“.....does that thing really exists in here?” (Liliyn)

She asked with a depressed tone.

“Yes. That thing exists in here. Although I don't know the reason why it is in here, the effect towards us is already credible proof that's in here..... I'm certainly sure of this.” (Cruzer)

“.....I see.” (Liliyn)

“Milady....” (Silva)

Silva seemed to have been worried about Liliyn due to her obvious bewilderment about this.

“You said you were certain about this? Then it means you have confirmed it with your own eyes? (Liliyn)

“I did. Despite how I look right now, I'm very proficient in searching mysterious things.” (Cruzer)

“Oh, now that you mention it, your family was also like that.” (Liliyn)

She shrugged her shoulders as if to say “Can't be helped”. Cruzer's family descendants were appraisal experts, so if Cruzer says he confirmed it, then it is very reliable indeed.

“Anyway, with this, we have already grasped their intentions. Those guys are surely aiming for the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》if it really is here.” (Liliyn)

“I agree.” (Silva)

“That Predecessor Demon Lord probably ordered this retrieval. Although I

don't know what they will use it for, it's obvious it's going to be something bad. Its importance is also supported by sending a 『Spirit』named Abyss." (Liliyn)

If he sent a 『Spirit』in his place, then he would not have any worry of getting lost because of the clairvoyance of that being.

"Are we going to chase them out?" (Silva)

Liliyn pondered for a little, before she shook her head in face of Silva's question.

"Let's leave them be." (Liliyn)

"....are you fine with it?" (Silva)

Because of her unexpected reply, Silva exaggeratedly asked in surprise.

"Yeah, although that Abyss guy was certainly a 『Spirit』, those guys, or at least, those two won't be able to get it, if we are talking about the 『Core of the Founder Demon Lord』 of course." (Liliyn)

"You don't seem to be lying..." (Cruzer)

Cruzer who had been listening to this, lightly made sigh as if to say "I give up, you win.". Although she said that, she was a little irritated for not being able to return the payback to them.

"Of course I am. Even I was deceived by it. I would be running over there if I could feel it right now you know?" (Liliyn)

"Oh dear, I knew you were going to say that." (Cruzer)

"Still Milady, what if those people were able to reach the 『Core』, are you sure they can't obtain it?" (Silva)

"Let me see, if those guys really did reach its location then....." (Liliyn)

3rd Person POV

"Oi Abyss! What is the meaning of this!" (Iraora)

The reason why Iraora was shouting is due to him being speechless by the spectacle stretched in front of their eyes. However, Abyss who was besides him, didn't respond and stared at it quietly.

“What the heck is this! Wha....why are there so many 《Core》in here!” (Iraora)

As for their current location, they arrived at a place they were unfamiliar of as numerous bluish black gems greeted them in every direction.

“How is this supposed to be a cave when it’s this utterly wide! What the hell is going in here!?” (Iraora)

“.....” (Abyss)

“Oi Abyss! Open that fucking mouth of yours and do something about this!” (Iraora)

Although the situation had become too confusing, Abyss won’t answer him even with his frantic shout earlier. It was making Iraora more irritated.

“Where the hell is the real 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》! Aren’t you a 《Clairvoyant Race》? Then find it already!” (Iraora)

However, Abyss still didn’t respond as he continued looking at the shining gems around them. And finally....

“....this is quite astonishing.” (Abyss)

“Hah? What the heck are you talking about?” (Iraora)

“This spectacle... should I say as expected of the Founder Demon Lord’s power...” (Abyss)

Abyss who said such word, then approached and touched one of the gems. He took it with his small hands easily.

“Oh! Is that the real thing!” (Iraora)

“....no, you are mistaken.” (Abyss)

“Hah? But isn’t this the illusion of that guy? If you can touch it like that, isn’t that the genuine one?” (Iraora)

Abyss dropped the gem and broke like a shattered glass bead when it hit the ground.

“Once you have mastered magic, it is very difficult to tell it apart from reality. It can dominate one’s inner soul and manipulate their feelings. That’s magic. For instance, I want to touch the gem, and when I try to touch it, it becomes

possible to touch it.” (Abyss)

“....?” (Iraora)

Iraora inclines his head as if to show that he’s having difficulty understanding Abyss’ words. But Abyss ignored him and continued with his explanation.

“However, if we think about it oppositely...”

The moment he said that, he reached to another gem only to be in vain. His hands passed through it like touching a reflection of it.

“It becomes an illusion the moment I convinced myself it was just a fake.” (Abyss)

“.....then what does this mean?” (Iraora)

“In other words, this is a space created by the real 『Core』’s magic where your inner thoughts are reflected real time.” (Abyss)

“...wait, then isn’t the solution easy! Let’s just think that the real thing is in here!” (Iraora)

Though he thought the solution was that simple after that complicated explanation but,

“Listen, even if we perceive these gems as the real one, do you think that is the genuine one?” (Abyss)

“...hah?” (Iraora)

“What you will experience is probably an illusion that gives you the real thing that you most desired.” (Abyss)

Iraora couldn’t understand it still, so he stared blankly in puzzlement.

“Then let us assume then. Assume that you are under the impression of an illusion that makes you think this is the real thing. Then this moving world that we are now is just an illusion set to makes us think we are in here.” (Abyss)

“I somehow get the idea.” (Iraora)

“In short, with this illusion in place, it is impossible to find the real thing.” (Abyss)

“H-h-hey! Are you saying we’re on a stalemate here! What happened to the『Spirit』can see through this and that! There is a limit on how one can be useless you know!” (Iraora)

“『Spirit』’s are not omnipotent. This is something that cannot be seen even if you have a《Clairvoyant Vision》. In order to break through this magic, it will require power that defies common sense.” (Abyss)

Abyss leaks a sigh of amazement as he looked at the wide space in front of him.

“If it’s the『Fairy Queen』or the『Spirit King』, they might be able to understand this kind of phenomenon. Unfortunately, that level of perception is out of my reach.” (Abyss)

“W-what the fuck...” (Iraora)

“This is obviously beyond my powers. No, it might be because His Majesty predicted this would happen that he sent us towards here.” (Abyss)

“Hah? What’s your point?” (Iraora)

Avoros had something to them before they went to this place.

『About that thing I requested, if you can get it, will you pick it up for me and bring it back?』

That’s what he said.

“In other words, His Majesty may have visited this place once before us. And similarly, he fell in the same situation as us and abandoned it with regrets. And so he thought that if a『Spirit』like me is dispatched here, then there would be a chance.” (Abyss)

“Then that means, we failed this fucking mission. No, wait a minute. Didn’t you have a《Magic-Nullification》trait? Then why are you affected by this kind of magic?” (Iraora)

It was as he said.『High-Ranking Spirits』are existences who have an ability inside their body called《Magic-Nullification》.

“Perhaps this magic has the power to invalidate《Magic-Nullification》” (Abyss)

"Hey hey, isn't that even possible!" (Iraora)

"Yes they do. That category of magic is called 《Absolute Magic》." (Abyss)

"What the heck is that?" (Iraora)

"Another name for it is 《Spirit Magic》. Iraora, do you know of the phenomenon called the 《Red Rain》?" (Abyss)

"Hah? You mean that rain that's considered a magic but also can invalidate magic?" (Iraora)

"Well with that recognition, there's no doubt that's the one, but [Spirits] can use magic under that rain. That's because the magic [Spirits] handle has an effect that invalidate all other interferences. Even if it's 《Magic-Nullification》, it is powerless over 《Absolute Magic》." (Abyss)

"Then can't you cast your own magic since it can nullify interferences?" (Iraora)

Though Abyss could understand where he was going with this, he had a rather complex expression about it. What Iraora meant to say is that if Abyss uses his 《Spirit Magic》 then wouldn't they be able to break past the interference.

"Certainly we have that kind of option." (Abyss)

"Then why don't you use your magic...." (Iraora)

"However 《Absolute Magic》 acknowledges superiority and inferiority." (Abyss)

"Hah?" (Iraora)

"If someone strong is capable of causing this phenomenon...." (Abyss)

"....." (Iraora)

"Then the current me is unable to invalidate this kind of magic." (Abyss)

"....tsk, what a useless guy! Then that means all we did were in vain!?" (Iraora)

Iraora clicks his tongue as he put sarcasm in his words towards expressionless Abyss.

"Not really. We were able to accomplish the mission of confirming our goal so that we can prepare countermeasures in the future. Although it would have

been better if we could get the real thing, at least we got information about this." (Abyss)

"Then what are we going to do now" (Iraora)

"For the meantime, let us report back to His Majesty and wait for further instructions."

".....tsk, this mission is troublesome, fuck!" (Iraora)

The two of them returned their heels back towards the exit as they left the widely broad area before them.

Chapter 232 - Appointment

After Liliyn and the others gave up chasing Abyss' group from retrieving the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》, they went back to Cruzer's shelter where Shamoe and Mikazuki was waiting for their arrival.

"Milady, I may have asked this before, but are you really sure that the 《Core》 would be left untouched?" (Silva)

Although Silva was asking it to Liliyn, it was Cruzer who replied to his question.

"It's going to be alright, I'm sure of it. You remember what I told you about what I saw there right?" (Cruzer)

"Yes. I do remember." (Silva)

"If it's those two, they won't be able to do something about it. The power of the 《Core》is that abnormal." (Cruzer)

"....if you say so." (Silva)

Silva didn't pursue the subject anymore because he noticed that neither Liliyn or Cruzer was worried about it.

"....well then." (Cruzer)

All of a sudden, Cruzer eyes sharpened as he turned it towards Silva and Liliyn.

"Let us continue to that topic we were talking about awhile ago." (Cruzer)

Silva nodded to show his recollection of their talk while slightly perplexed by the sudden change of Cruzer's mood.

"It's about Hiiro-sama, I presume" (Silva)

"The youth you call by the name Hiiro.... Is it really true that he participated and used the sword 《Zangeki》in the previous war?" (Cruzer)

"....that's a definite yes." (Silva)

For a few seconds, Cruzer's expression distorted into a bitter one. His dark

expression had a trace of regret and concern.

“For 《Zangeki》to be used in the war...does Zafu knows about this?” (Cruzer)

Zafu was Cruzer’s so called apprentice whom he taught about the basics of blacksmithing for about one week. And more importantly, Zafu should know that using Cruzer’s creations to hurt other people in this world was something he hated.

That’s why, he found it hard to believe that Zafu who knew such ideal of his, would hand over 《Zangeki》to a person who can easily participate in a war.

“Originally, Hiiro-sama was only an adventurer. Of course, we told Zafu that the sword would be used if they encountered resistance. However, we did not expect that Hiiro-sama would voluntarily join the war, even we who had participated as well, did not understand his reason as of yet.” (Silva)

“I see...no, I’m sorry, please continue.” (Cruzer)

Silva then briefly told Cruzer about their travels. The youth named Hiiro was only intending to sightsee the whole world. And he seems to be cooperating with Liliyn’s ambition by laying the groundwork for it to be realized.

Though laying the groundwork sounds good, it’s actually a movement to reach out to those painfully living in this world and gather them to 【A place where everyone can enjoy】which Liliyn-san intends to build. This was also the reason why Cruzer went along with them.

“B-but...” (Cruzer)

That person doesn’t hurt his comrades? Though Silva may have said that, Cruzer couldn’t easily assent to it as his expression turned into a gloomy one.

“Then, how about meeting him personally for once?” (Silva)

“....eh?.....meet him personally? Me?” (Cruzer)

“Yes. By meeting him face to face, you will be able to judge if Hiiro-sama is worthy of 《Zangeki》.” (Silva)

“Kukuku, whatever you think about him, I’m sure you will be definitely surprised. If you meet him now your sense of values will surely be blown away by his ambiguity, but is that still fine with you ?” (Liliyn)

Liliyn looked like an excited child, but somewhat nasty. It was as if she was looking at them with mischievous eyes. Is that how unfathomable this man called Hiiro is?

“....for you to describe a person that far...” (Cruzer)

Cruzer lightly sighed as he quietly shut his eyes. It seems he needs to think about this with careful consideration.

Silva whispers to Liliyn not loud enough for Cruzer to hear.

“Is it alright to do this Milady?” (Silva)

“What’s wrong about it?” (Liliyn)

“Hiiro-sama deemed it bothersome to visit this place. I believe we will receive the same answer from him again if we ask him?” (Silva)

“I know that. Isn’t that the reason why we are here in the first place? (Liliyn)

“Eh?” (Silva)

“That...that guy said that....he would help me in establishing my dream.” (Liliyn)

Silva didn’t say anything in face of the blushing Liliyn.

“The persuasion of Cruzer is also related to my dream. S-so, that person will surely agree, no, he will definitely come! I-if he doesn’t then I’m going to force him to come here!” (Liliyn)

“...Milady, I think you’re getting your priorities backward.” (Silva)

“S-silence! B-besides that guy is....” (Liliyn)

Liliyn sends a glance towards Cruzer who was still in deep thought.

“If it’s that guy, he will be able to change the present Cruzer.” (Liliyn)

“.... I see, I also agree with that too.” (Silva)

Liliyn also closed her eyes as Silva kindly smiled at her. Next to them, Shamoe swept Mikazuki’s head as the latter still slept on her lap. The mood between each pair felt like a mother and child, it was an otherworldly scene rarely seen in this gloomy cave.

After a while, Cruzer finally opened his eyes. Everyone noticed the change in him, and paid attention to the answer he had arrived.

“....I understand. Let me meet this person, no, I would rather like to meet him personally.” (Cruzer)

“Understood. What time would you like to meet him?” (Liliyn)

“Let me see, will tomorrow perhaps suffice?” (Cruzer)

“Fumu... then we will come back here noon of tomorrow.” (Liliyn)

Silva nods similarly with them. Shamoe also made the same gesture in return to their finalized appointment.

“Noted. Then I will be waiting here tomorrow.” (Cruzer)

Liliyn stood up as Cruzer said so, and gestured Silva to give Cruzer the sack they brought. It was the luggage Mikazuki brought in her beast-form.

“Oh my, you didn’t have to do this.” (Cruzer)

Inside the sack were delicacies brought as a present for Cruzer. Cruzer shyly expresses his delightedness.

Silva carried the still sleeping Mikazuki in his arms as Shamoe followed in tow. Though Liliyn also followed them from behind,

“Look forward to it Cruzer. Hiiro is not an ordinary person you see every day.”

And then she went out along with her companions. Cruzer waved in response to her words as he expressed a wry smile.

Meanwhile, Abyss and Iraora came back from the 【Shanjumon Cave】 and reported what happened to the Predecessor Demon Lord Avoros.

He listened to their report with a smile on her face, but midway, his eyebrows moved as if he heard something of concern.

“....she was also there? 《Red Rose》 herself?” (Avoros)

《Red Rose》was a nickname of Liliyn. Abyss affirmed Avoros’ question about her.

“Hee, but why was she there...I thought 《Red Rose》 hated that place because

of her. Now why would she go to that place with that in mind. Very suspicious, don't you think?" (Avoros)

"Is there something else inside that place that we don't know?" (Iraora)

Though Iraora asked a question,

"Uuun, the only important thing inside the cave is 『The Core of the Founder Demon Lord』, did I miss anything else? That place is swarmed by high level monsters, surely no one would bother living in such a place..." (Avoros)

He was answered back by Avoros' brooding.

"Now that I remember, I believe she had companions." (Abyss)

"Hm? Companions? Are you talking about Mr. Red robe?" (Avoros)

Abyss shook his head in response to Avoros' question.

"No, he was a person I have not seen before. Moreover, a beastman." (Abyss)

Due to his words, Avoros raised his head as if something clicked.

"Hee, a beastman huh? That boy really does have a wide connection of people. Is that the only beastman you saw back then? Although I heard it awhile ago, what does he look like?" (Avoros)

"He had a yellow hair, and wore garments similar to a monk. And he had a sword that gives off a strange atmosphere." (Abyss)

"...Strange you say?" (Avoros)

"Yes, it felt as cold as ice but it also feels hot as a flame, it was an ominous katana he held." (Abyss)

"Yellow hair... an ominous looking sword, and a beastman...?" (Avoros)

Avoros repeated this grumble as he looked up in the sky, and then suddenly, his eyes widened a little.

(...No, that's impossible. That man is surely living in hell... wait, is it because he's in hell that he's still alive? If he's hiding in 【Shanjumon Cave】, then isn't that the most suitable place to hide...?)

Avoros shook his head as he thought of that.

(But if that's the case, wouldn't he need to go to the surface? Everything makes sense if he's the one 《Red Rose》 is in contact with kukuku, but even if so it's impossible 《Red Rose》. Even if you drag that man, it's impossible to convince someone who once detested living in this forsaken world.)

Avoros himself was one of those people that had been repeatedly rejected so many times when invited that person on his side. No matter how favorable it is to that guy, that person was never swayed by one bit from it.

Avoros knows one of the reasons why he became such an existence, so it was impossible for a man like Cruzer Jio to believe in hope, much less to trust a person.

(Anyway, what could someone like him matter now, he rejected me so I won't bother with him. More importantly...)

Avoros threw away his thoughts about Cruzer and,

"Abyss, Iraora, I'm sorry troubling you in searching for that. Good work."
(Avoros)

"What about the 《Core》?" (Iraora)

Iraora asked him so.

"It's alright, we won't immediately need it for now. And besides, it's not like that thing is unobtainable, right?" (Avoros)

His eyes were glowing as if he had something obviously planned in his mind. In face of that, Iraora slightly trembled while Abyss was calmly standing.

"Understood. Then we will proceed in collecting it." (Abyss)

"Eh? O-oi, wait for me Abyss!" (Iraora)

"Un~ Good luck you two~" (Avoros)

Abyss turned his back and went out of the room, Iraora who was confused by what happened, hurriedly chased after him. And Avoros who was left alone inside the room, leaked a light sigh.

"....Not yet. It's not perfect yet." (Avoros)

He looked at the sky without his usual smile as if he was looking at a hateful

enemy beyond it. And then he raised his right hand slowly and tried to grasp something.

"I will not give in to you. I will surely obtain it....definitely..." (Avoros)

Chapter 233 - Gathering of Hiiro's Party

Hiiro POV

“Care to explain what that monkey is for?” (Liliyn)

Hiiro’s group was invited to the 【Spirit Forest】in which inside it, they gained valuable experiences and thus returned safely into of the rooms in the castle of 【Xaous】. Likewise, Liliyn’s group who had similarly gone to meet an acquaintance came back at the same time as them.

Thus, after seeing a small animal inside the room, Liliyn naturally asked about it.

“Yo! Best regards here!” (Tenn)

“It talked!?” (Liliyn)

Liliyn, Shamoe and Mikazuki made their own surprised faces while Silva quietly stared at the small monkey —no—Hiiro’s contracted 『Spirit』. As expected an explanation was needed in face of this, so he let Nikki do the explanation. Midway though, Camus supplemented her explanations a lot of times, and in the end, they were able to explain the details entailing it.

“While you guys missed to say about me being a 『Contracted Spirit』...umu, not bad my subordinates! Kuhahaha!” (Tenn)

It appears that this guy enjoyed their reactions.

“Still, among the animals you could choose from, why select a dwarf-like monkey? It’s such a waste. Wasn’t there any fellows over there that seemed stronger?” (Liliyn)

“Mu! What are you implying! For your information, I’m a high ranking 『Spirit』 you know! And speaking of dwarves, you are not one to tal..... eh?” (Tenn)

It was not a stretch that Tenn became speechless. Because a dark aura was drifting behind Liliyn, and it was obvious those were murderous intents of hers.

“Did you say something monkey? Or do you prefer me peeling your skin and have you bath under the sunlight like a dried fish? What do you think?” (Liliyn)

“N-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-no, it must have been your imagination! Ukiii!” (Tenn)

Tenn’s small body shivered as he hid behind Hiiro and clung to him.

“O-oi Hiiro! What’s with that girl over there!” (Tenn)

He whispered to Hiiro as Tenn had a disgusted expression.

“Like I said before, she’s not your ordinary girl.” (Hiiro)

“You never told me that! What’s with that girl, her aura is so similar to Grandpa Hoozuki!? She’s suuuper scary!? Ukii!!” (Tenn)

Hiiro who was reading a book with his one hand, shrugged his shoulders as if to say “Don’t ask me. I don’t know.”

“A-NY-WAY! She’s the type I’m not good at! Those eyes are dead serious...if I relax my guard for just a bit, I....I would become a dried fish!” (Tenn)

But in face of that, Hiiro had an expression that was saying “Stop clinging to me and your clamors are irritating.” Shamoe and Mikazuki however had a different impression on it as they embraced Tenn while murmuring “So adorable!”

“Uwa~ I didn’t know I was this popular, kuhaha~” (Tenn)

Tenn seemed to have welcomed the sudden gesture. Though Tenn was not that conscious about being hugged by Shamoe’s plump chest, one man...no... one pervert reacted to such a scene.

“Nuoooooooo! How envious to be hugged like that!!!!” (Hentai)

That guy shouted as his eyes was beaming with excitement and pleasure. Dangerous.

“T-Tenn-dono! Even if it’s Tenn-dono, there’s a limit to everything!” (Silva)

“Shut up and die Hentai.” (Hiiro)

Hiiro who couldn’t read his book properly said that with a disgusted face.

“Oh? Oh! Isn’t that Silva! Oha~” (Tenn)

Tenn waves at Silva as if they were like an acquaintance.

“You, you know this guy?” (Hiiro)

It seemed to have gotten Hiiro's attention. Tenn hops down from the bed as he escaped from the arms of Shamoe and sits besides Hiiro.

"Well yeah. Although it was a long time ago since then." (Tenn)

Liliyn seems to have gotten onto the flow as well as she turned her gaze to Silva. And Silva, the person in question, only shrugged his shoulders as if to say "good grief"

"Let me see. I first met Tenn-dono when I was still inside the 【Spirit Forest】" (Silva)

"Yeah, we did meet at that time although your appearance doesn't seem to have changed a bit. I guess your white hair is different from that time?" (Tenn)

"Nofofofof! I was still young back then!" (Silva)

"Anyway, I'm glad you are still in one piece." (Tenn)

"Indeed. And you seem to be in good health too." (Silva)

"Ukiki! Ah, Grandpa wishes to see you once again, do you still have no intention of coming back?" (Tenn)

".....unfortunately, no." (Silva)

It was understandable that something was up as Silva replied to Tenn's question without breaking his usual smile. Though to be frank, Hiiro was curious about it, but he held back and did not pry the said matter.

That said, Tenn who also quietly saw his expression, returned a bright expression to him.

"...Is that so! Well isn't that fine! Grandpa seems to be alive and kicking, so I'm sure... you have a lot of chances to meet with him again." (Tenn)

"....thank you." (Silva)

Why was he saying thanks in response? Is it because Tenn did not divulge his past? Either case, it's not helping in restoring the mood, so how.....

"Ukiki! Oh yeah, I haven't properly introduced myself! My name is Tenn! Please take care of me from hereafter." (Tenn)

.....right

“Sure, but that depends on how cooperative you will be. Kukuku.” (Liliyn)

“Hiiiiii!” (Tenn)

Tenn was frightened once again by Liliyn. Apparently it had become a trauma to him. However, Liliyn noticed something else besides Tenn, it was the thing tied on Nikki’s hand.

“Mu? Nikki what’s that on your wrist?” (Liliyn)

Nikki rolled her sleeves as a ribbon was revealed on her wrists.

“Magic seems to be present in it...” (Liliyn)

Hiyo was impressed by Liliyn’s discovery about it. This was the ribbon given to Nikki by the White Snake 『Spirit』 Hime when they were about to leave the 【Spirit Forest】. Hiyo also had a suspicion that this ribbon wasn’t an ordinary piece of cloth.

And Liliyn saw through it by insights only. She’s amazing.

“Oh oh? You mean this ribbon? Mufufu.” (Nikki)

Nikki happily explained the details about it. And as to why she was happy about it, she heard it from Camus after she fainted.

When Hime was about to take a path that she was about to regret, Nikki did something to help her do something about it. Because of that, Hime felt gratitude towards her and entrusted Nikki one of her ribbon as proof.

According to Nikki, there seems to be a gentle magic flowing inside it. And more than anything, she was very happy because Hime recognized her for who she is.

“Hou, but to be able to inherit something from a 『Spirit』.... Tsk, I should have went with you guys after all.” (Liliyn)

Though Liliyn pouts like a young child, the place they’ve been to was only possible because the 『Spirits』 allowed it so. For a ferocious girl like Liliyn, it’s probably impossible for her to enter it just like them.

“By the way, where did Liliyn-dono’s group went to?” (Nikki)

As Nikki asked that question, “Oh, I remembered that we have something

important to discuss” , Silva muttered in response.

(After a few minutes)

“Troublesome” (Hiiro)

That was the one-word response of Hiiro to Silva’s story.

“Haa, I knew you were going to say that.” (Liliyn)

Liliyn shook her head from side to side as if she had predicted his reaction.

“Based from your story, I don’t think it’s necessary for me to go to [Shanjumon Cave]” (Hiiro)

It seems that there was an old friend living in that place, however, what’s the point of him going there to meet this acquaintance of them?

What’s more, that person doesn’t seem to have intention of leaving his secular way of living, and wants them to meet at his place. Seriously?

“Just so you know Hiiro, meeting that guy is also for the sake of my ambition.” (Liliyn)

“.....” (Hiiro)

“Y-you said you would su...support my dream. Tha-that’s why... you ought to follow what I say!” (Liliyn)

“Ah....Milady ruined it...” (Silva)

Why is she blushing while pointing that finger to him?....And what does he expect me to do by saying that?

See? Even Silva dropped his shoulders for some reason as if he gave up on something.

“Mi-milady! If you’re going to beg about something...at least, at least do that! Show him that irresistible upturned eyes look!” (Shamoe)

Doji Maid... is it alright to say that when everyone is present in here?

“What are you saying! As if I’m going to do something like that! And b-besides, from where did you learn that knowledge from! Did you hear it from someone!?” (Liliyn)

"Err.... I think it was from Silva-sama." (Shamoe)

As Shamoe innocently smiled in response, Silva murmured, "Oh Jesus." as he began to pray to the Gods.

"You! Why are you teaching such stuffs to Shamoeeeeeee!" (Liliyn)

"Gaffun!?" (Silva)

A splendid round house kick was delivered directly to Silva's face as he crashed head first on the wall.

"A-anyway, it's becomes a problem if you don't come!" (Liliyn)

"Even if you say that. Besides if he wants to talk, why not come here?" (Hiiro)

"I told you that he can't do it! The guy has some circumstances!" (Liliyn)

"Is it because he's a beastman? If that's the case, getting permission from Maou would solve the problem." (Hiiro)

"That's not the reason! There are some people aiming for him, if we bring him in here, a riot might suddenly occur and it will become more troublesome than it is!" (Liliyn)

".....then don't introduce such a guy like that to me." (Hiiro)

Hiiro thought so instinctively. For someone like him who had a constitution that attracts trouble along the way. It's natural that he would refuse to meet such a bomb-like character. And so,

"I'll say it once again, I'm not going." (Hiiro)

"B-but this is for the sake of my dream you know!" (Liliyn)

"Mu...:" (Hiiro)

Certainly, Hiiro did vow to support her dream, so he had no intention on refusing her. He wishes to see the realization of her dreams. But Hiiro was hardly convinced that she would get closer to her dream but meeting such a person. That's how he felt on this matter.

"B-besides, the 《Zangeki》 you hold right now was made by Cruzer!" (Liliyn)

.....hm?

“That’s why, even if it’s just for once...” (Liliyn)

“Oi” (Hiiro)

“Have a talk with...eh?” (Liliyn)

“What did you say just now?” (Hiiro)

Liliyn was astonished by Hiiro’s sudden interest.

“Eh..ah. At the very least, have a talk with him for once.” (Liliyn)

“No, before that.” (Hiiro)

“The 《Zangeki》you hold right now was made by Cruzer?” (Liliyn)

Apparently what he heard wasn’t a mistake, nice job memories. Hiiro looked at the sword leaning against the bed and,

“You said his name was...Cruzer right?” (Hiiro)

“Y-yeah.” (Liliyn)

“Let me confirm something first. Is his name Cruzer Jio?” (Hiiro)

Chapter 234 - Surprising Point of Contact

Cruzer POV

Cruzer Jio who was currently living at 【Shanjumon Cave】felt signs of someone approaching. And it wasn't just a single person, but a group of people heading towards his vicinity.

Apparently, he did not feel any malice from them, so he obediently sat inside the space which he calls it his room.

He could hear the sound of the footsteps getting closer, and then stops close at his location. Cruzer slowly opened his eyes to the direction of that sound and greeted them with a smile.

"Yaa, greetings my guests from yesterday." (Cruzer)

Hiro's group was standing behind Silva who guided them to this place. Cruzer who noticed the several new faces, carefully focused his line of sight on them.

However, before anyone could break the ice, Hiro took the initiative and,

"Are you Cruzer Jio?" (Hiro)

His eyes were those that was ascertaining something. What could he be confirming? Cruzer thought so even though he was the one in here who had a lot of questions.

"Yes. I'm certainly the person named Cruzer Jio." (Cruzer)

While he answered that, Cruzer immediately noticed the sword sheathed and tied on his waist.

"Are you perhaps...Hiro-san then?" (Cruzer)

"Yeah. I came here because I heard you wanted to meet me." (Hiro)

"Hou~" (Cruzer)

"Though I say that, I had also wanted to meet you for once because there's something I have to tell you." (Hiro)

".....I wonder what that is? I'm pretty sure this is our first time meeting with

each other though?" (Cruzer)

At the very least, this was Cruzer's first time meeting Hiiro. And yet, he had something to discuss with him. What's the meaning of this?

"Please be relieved. It's definitely a fact that it's our first time meeting here. However, I know a little bit about you." (Hiiro)

"He's not lying." (Liliyn)

"Liliyn-san...." (Cruzer)

Because Liliyn suddenly interjected with their conversation, Cruzer turned his gaze towards her to ascertain what exactly happened.

"After returning back home, we spoke to Hiiro about the appointment. At first, he was hell-bent on declining to come here. However, for some reason, when I mentioned your name, he immediately changed his mind." (Liliyn)

When the name Cruzer Jio was revealed to Hiiro, he seemed to have been agitated by it, and then began to ask questions ascertaining if what he knows was exactly the same.

Golden yellow hair, and a master blacksmithy. And finally he heard that person had a world-changing talent as a beast man, Hiiro muttered "Found you." and told his sudden approval to Liliyn by saying "Take me tomorrow to that person."

Of course, Liliyn naturally asked why, but Hiiro replied that he would be speaking it for tomorrow.

"I understand. Then may I ask a question? Why do you know me?" (Cruzer)

Cruzer stared straightly at Hiiro with serious eyes. And then, Hiiro slowly replied to him,

"You....Are you perhaps the father of Winkaa Jio?" (Hiiro)

(TL Note: And finally the LN character finally appears. ウインカア can be read as Winkaa or Uinkaa.)

As if he couldn't believe what he just heard, Cruzer gasped for a moment as his body stiffened from the shock of those words.

Hiiro POV

Just one look at his reaction proves he was right. This person is definitely that fellow's real father. They both had the same golden yellow hair. And above all, his calm expression was very similar to that person.

And that person was a girl named Winkaa Jio that Hiiro met when he was traveling in the Humas territory with Arnold and Muir.

"Ui...nka? H-how do you know that name!?" (Cruzer)

It was obvious that he was trembling from his revelation. Although he only took a guess about it, but by looking at his reaction, Hiiro had gained more evidence than he had expected.

And similar to Cruzer, having heard of a mysterious name come out from his mouth, made his party knit their eyebrows in puzzlement.

"Hiiro, who is this Winkaa? What do you mean by those words?" (Liliyn)

As Liliyn thought it would be quicker to ask Hiiro about it rather than Cruzer, she instead received a far more shocking information.

"Winkaa Jio...It's this guy's daughter." (Hiiro)

"His daughter!?! W-wait a minute. Are you saying you met Cruzer's daughter?" (Liliyn)

"Yeah." (Hiiro)

His meeting with Winkaa Jio was the time when all three of them, Hiiro, Arnold & Muir took a rest in a hot spring surrounded by mountains, and within that place, there he encountered her.

A girl who wielded a large spear fell from one of the rocky mountains close to their location. Apparently, the cause was starvation, so somehow they were able to hand out some of theirs and save the girl.

The girl at that time was Winkaa Jio. For a while, Winkaa joined them in their travels, but her purpose was not journeying around the world like Hiiro.

Her purpose was to look for her father. Her purpose was to find his father by journeying the whole world and live together with him.

"W-why would that...girl...what happened to Linde?" (Cruzer)

(TL Note: I read リンデ as Linde. Feel free to make your suggestions. Although it can also be read as Rinde.)

Cruzer was very pale when he was listening to Hiiro's story.

"Linde? If I remember correctly, that's the name of her mother?" (Hiiro)

"That's not exactly correct...but, Winkaa might have thought of Linde as her mother. That's because I requested her to act like one..." (Cruzer)

He spat out those words with a bitter expression but somehow Hiiro understood what Cruzer wanted to say. He heard from Liliyn that a weapon made by Cruzer fell into the hands of a thief, and because of that weapon he lost his family.

At that time, it seems that his parents and his wife were sacrificed. Their daughter...Winkaa seemed to have been fine, but Cruzer realized that Winkaa might fall with the same fate as his family if things continue as it is, so he left the young Winkaa and entrusted it to her wife's sister.

"Linde was my wife's...little sister. I asked her to become her mother for Winkaa's sake." (Cruzer)

So that story was true after all.

"I asked Linde not to inform Winkaa that her real mother was dead. So I'm sure that Winkaa thinks of Linde as her real mother." (Cruzer)

"So that explains it. However, that Linde seems to have died, though." (Hiiro)

"Wha!? Shedied? Don't tell me it's that thief again!?" (Cruzer)

His gloomy face raised up from the momentum and leaned forward as he said those words. Instinctively, he drew a step back from his position, probably realizing his agitation.

"Nope. Winkaa said she died from an illness." (Hiiro)

"I-is that so... well, Linde had a weak body since the beginning so that's quite possible..." (Cruzer)

He made painful expression filled with regret as he hanged his head in shame.

“I haven’t finished my story you know?” (Hiiro)

“Eh?” (Cruzer)

“When her mother died, that guy was still 7 years old I think.” (Hiiro)

“What!?” (Cruzer)

“And since then, that girl had lived a life of solitude.” (Hiiro)

“Winkaa was.....alone?” (Cruzer)

Although Winkaa told him that he was looking for her Father while traveling, who could have expected that this person was the one she had been looking for?

“That’s right. He traveled around the human continent to become an adventurer and find her father.” (Hiiro)

“W-what have I done...” (Cruzer)

Hiiro leaked a sigh of amazement as he saw the quivering body of Winkaa’s Father.

“Since you are her father, I’m sure you know what treatment she would be experiencing in the human continent. What kind of life that guy had lived in there....do you understand what I’m trying to say?” (Hiiro)

Of course, Cruzer’s reasons for parting with Winkaa was understandable. His judgment was the correct way that time. If he stays with her, misfortune would definitely befall her and perhaps hurt her in the process.

Thus, the best option was to release his beloved child from his grasp. It was very painful decision to make. However, he could relate to Winkaa’s intention more than anything.

So he understood what kind of life Winkaa had been living since then, a bitter life full of hardships.

“I don’t have any intentions of condemning you. However, did you consider the possibility of her going out to travel just for the sake of finding you?” (Hiiro)

“.....I didn’t” (Cruzer)

“What an idiot” (Hiiro)

"That girl, she's very similar to my wife..... she resembles Pia. A graceful woman who had the nature to go out and travel a lot." (Cruzer)

"Even though she's a human?" (Hiiro)

Everyone except Hiiro and Cruzer was wrapped in an expression of astonishment. Naturally, Nikki and Mikazuki had an expression that they don't understand what's going on.

"A human...? Oi Cruzer, I understand well that you have a daughter now, but a human as your partner? Really?" (Liliyn)

Liliyn asked as the representative of the astonished group.

"Yes, Pia is a full-fledged 『Humas』" (Cruzer)

"If that's the case.." (Liliyn)

"It's as you think. Winkaa isa half." (Cruzer)

Shamoe was startled as her expression stiffened.

"Shamoe-chan...?" (Mikazuki)

Mikazuki noticed her unusual behavior so she asked her. But it was understandable, Shamoe was also a half.

In other words, everyone was shocked by the fact that Winkaa, a half, a heresy to both humans and beast men, traveled around the world at the age of 7.

The treatment of halves had hardly changed since the past and present. In several cases, they would be treated with disdain and disgust.

And added to the fact that Winkaa was traveling at the human continent alone. It was an unbelievable story for them.

Silva quietly puts his hands on Shamoe's and smiles kindly to rest assured of it. It helped her a little, although she still felt a slight shiver, and returned a somewhat awkward smile to the worrying gaze of Mikazuki.

"....now that you mention it, that young lady over there is also a half. I'm sorry" (Cruzer)

Cruzer seemed to have understood her state and cast his eyes downward.

"That guy is still traveling to look for you. Even now." (Hiiro)

"....I see. For you and that child to have a surprising point of contact..." (Cruzer)

"It's nothing more of a coincidence really." (Hiiro)

".... that's not it, having traveled together with you is a proof that that child appreciates you in so many ways...*sigh* I guess my blunders are still continuing even now." (Cruzer)

"If you think so, then go out there meet with her quickly. Stop secluding yourself in this damp and humid cellar of yours." (Hiiro)

A passage of time passed by for a while, no one tried to speak until Cruzer made his choice about it. And finally, a change is seen in Cruzer's expression as his lips began to move quietly.

".....could you show me your katana?" (Cruzer)

"....ha?" (Hiiro)

Chapter 235 - Hiiro's Connection with the Zangeki

Due to the abrupt change in subject, Hiiro could only show a dumbfounded expression in face of it. However, Cruzer's eyes were definitely not joking. There might be a meaning to this if he showed him his katana.

He brought out the sheathed《Zangeki》tied around his waist and passed it to Cruzer. Thereupon, a shadow appeared on Hiiro's shoulders.

“You there! I won't forgive you if you do something weird to 《Zangeki-chan》!” (Tenn)

It was Tenn. Since he had fused with 《Zangeki》, he might be worried something bad might happen to the katana.

“....this is surprising. Are you perhaps a 『Spirit』?” (Cruzer)

“Hee~ for seeing through my identity with just one look, not bad! Hm? Wait a minute, are you telling me this guy is...” (Tenn)

Tenn quietly stares at Cruzer with dubious eyes. Did he notice something...? He was grumbling some words which made Hiiro anxious about his strange behavior.

(Though I wish he would stop grumbling while on someone's shoulders.. haa)

In any case, he would have to hear from Tenn later. Hiiro once again returned his gaze to Cruzer.

“.....eh!? T-this is.....I see.” (Cruzer)

Ignoring Ten's mumblings, Cruzer held the katana and look at it with appraising eyes. His gestures were as if Cruzer was having a conversation with the katana.

“It is as you can see. That guy can talk to swords as if it was natural to him.” (Liliyn)

It was Liliyn who answered his doubts.

Cruzer inspected the newly born 《Zangeki》in various different angles. At first, he had a shocked expression, then as he continued, he nodded many times.

“.....fufu” (Cruzer)

“What’s so funny?” (Hiiro)

All of a sudden, Cruzer laughed. Hiiro who felt bothered by it, asked him, however Cruzer shook the concern away and slipped the katana back to its sheath.

“Apparently, this child seems to have grown to something I cannot call my own anymore.” (Cruzer)

“....?” (Hiiro)

“This child said that you are his current master and Tenn is his contractor.” (Cruzer)

“Ah, he said my name...” (Tenn)

It seems Cruzer understood Tenn’s name from the katana without him saying it. So the story about him being able to talk was true after all? Amazing.

“At any rate, what happened to this child is really unexpected. For the sword to grow into a『Spirit Blade』... no, this is already in the realms of evolution.” (Cruzer)

“Aw, that’s sweet lad.” (Tenn)

Tenn puffed up his chest with pride as he said that.

“What’s more this molding..... it’s very beautiful. Zafu seems to have improved his own skills.” (Cruzer)

“I see. So what did you talk about with my katana?” (Hiiro)

“Since it had been a long time since we last saw each other, I had fun talking to it with a lot of things.” (Cruzer)

“And those were?” (Hiiro)

“Most of it is me being scolded by this child about Winkaa. I shouldn’t have done such a terrible thing on her or so it said.” (Cruzer)

Everyone silently looked at Cruzer who had a wry smile on his face.

“....I certainly didn’t imagine it would become like this.” (Cruzer)

Cruzer murmured while staring at the katana.

“《Zangeki》told me a lot of things. What kind of person is his master? Is he really worth trusting? And also his proactive support on Liliyn-san’s dream.” (Cruzer)

“That’s natural! Hiiro is my subordinate after all!” (Liliyn)

“Keep your jokes in your dreams.” (Hiiro)

“Mu! You still don’t understand the position you are in, huh?” (Liliyn)

“Spare me that. I don’t want to become a servant of a little girl like that perverted butler over there.” (Hiiro)

“Don’t call me a little girl!” (Liliyn)

“Nofofofofo! You should be honored to be a servant of a little girl! Nofofofofo!” (Silva)

It was obvious chaos was about to ensue but,

“...fufu.” (Cruzer)

Hiiro and Liliyn glares at Cruzer who gave off a faint laugh.

“ “What’s so funny?” ” (Hiiro & Liliyn)

Both of them spoke in sync as they threatened Cruzer, but the latter only took a natural attitude and shrugged it off away.

“It’s nothing. I now understand why Liliyn was able to pursue her dream again.” (Cruzer)

He directed a gentle smile without any malice to Liliyn which made her cross her arm in displeasure.

“If I remember correctly, you once called Hiiro-san as a non-standard person?” (Cruzer)

She said such things behind my back? Not that he disagrees with it, though.

“And you have a problem about that?” (Liliyn)

"To tell you the truth, my opinion of him right now won't change even if that was true." (Cruzer)

"....." (Liliyn)

"Your dream, 【A place where everyone can enjoy】, I thought that was just a fleeting dream. That even if I reach my hands out to it, it would vanish so easily, which is why I have declined many of your invitations." (Cruzer)

Everyone listened carefully to Cruzer as he continues his words.

"The world today had fallen into disorder unlike the distant past. Antagonism occurs because of race difference, and then this antagonism causes them to fight one another, and then they will seek an even greater power in order to win their war. And those who were defeated will connect this sadness to their love ones, which leads them to hatred, and the fight is extended once again. Just knowing my children are involved in these disputes crushes my heart with remorse." (Cruzer)

It was obvious that power is needed to win a fight. And in order to attain that power, strong weapons are needed. It seems he had his share of experience on that.

"Weapons are not just for decoration. And I understand that very well. I wanted them to use my weapons in order to protect those dear to them. However, I was a fool. Such foolish ideals of mine did not come true. I did not understand why at first. But after my loved ones were killed by the weapons I made, I understood it then. So I decided to disappear. I swore to myself not to make any weapons that would kill another person's life." (Cruzer)

The weapons he made back then might exist still now. And it was surely being used by a lot of people even now. But what Cruzer did was turn his eyes away from reality.

"....you're full of complaints, aren't you?" (Hiiro)

Only Hiiro spoke those cold words while everyone kept silent.

"To begin with, weapons are tools to fight no matter how you treat it. That's the reason why you make one anyway." (Hiiro)

“....yes.” (Cruzer)

“Whatever ideals you put into such a weapon, it is still up to the person who uses it that decides its purpose.” (Hiiro)

“....you’re right.” (Cruzer)

“In the end, you just hate that person who betrays your foolish ideals, don’t you?” (Hiiro)

“.....” (Cruzer)

“And then you turn your eye away from the reality and keep running away from your past. That goes the same with your daughter.” (Hiiro)

“Eh?” (Cruzer)

“Your ideals were naive since the beginning. Haven’t this guy informed you as well about that?” (Hiiro)

As he said so, Hiiro pointed at 《Zangeki》

“You are a father. Whatever you do, wherever you hide, as long as you are Cruzer Jio, then you are her father. And as a father, don’t allow your daughter to live in solitude.” (Hiiro)

“Hiiro-san.” (Cruzer)

“Running away isn’t that bad. There are important reasons by doing so. But, still running away from your past is a different matter.” (Hiiro)

“!?” (Cruzer)

Cruzer’s eyes were wide-eyed by the impact of his words.

“What you really have to do isn’t to confine yourself in such a place. If you really have such power, then why don’t you use that to move forward?” (Hiiro)

“.....fufu” (Cruzer)

“What’s so funny?” (Hiiro)

“Ah, sorry, my bad. As I said before, I had no intention of leaving this place no matter how many times you tell me about it. Because I might become an existence that causes a conflict again in this era” (Cruzer)

Certainly, if his existence was revealed, then it won't be funny if that King Rudolph would scheme a kidnapping against Cruzer's will.

"Cruzer..."

"Liliyn-san...I lost." (Cruzer)

"Eh?" (Liliyn)

"....this boy is full of surprises." (Cruzer)

"Haven't I told you before? This guy will surely overturn your ideals if you meet him." (Liliyn)

Hiyo knit his eyebrows in displeasure as Liliyn pointed a finger to him.

"Yes, you were exactly right. Who could have expected that he had been in contact with my daughter in the past and made 『Zangeki』 evolve? It was shocking. And to even get lectured by him without any means of refusal... truly shocking."

Cruzer fixed his eyes on Hiyo and then smiled.

"What's with that creepy smile?" (Hiyo)

"It's nothin.....can I ask a question?" (Cruzer)

"...as long as I can answer it." (Hiyo)

"Thank you." (Cruzer)

Cruzer fixed his posture and sat up straight. Instinctively, Hiyo sat cross-legged in return. They faced each other face to face.

"That child, 『Zangeki』told me that it trusts you completely as it's long-life partner." (Cruzer)

That's natural. 『Tsuranuki』who is now called 『Zangeki』 was Hiyo's first companion in his adventure. Longer than any of his companions right now.

"However, I don't want my weapons to be used in a war. That's why I have been collecting my children scattered around the world." (Cruzer)

Hiyo had heard this before from Liliyn, so he accepted his words.

"『Zangeki』as well, is originally my creations. What would you do if I said to

stop using that child in the war?" (Cruzer)

"Is that a question?" (Hiiro)

"Yes." (Cruzer)

Hiiro quietly stares at Cruzer's eyes. It was clear eyes testing his resolve. He understood that he won't accept a half-baked answer.

"....unfortunately, I can't do as you ask." (Hiiro)

"May I know the reason why?" (Cruzer)

"Because this guy is already mine." (Hiiro)

"....." (Cruzer)

"That's why I cannot do as you ask me to do." (Hiiro)

".....that child as well told me that it would become independent from me. But weapons can easily hurt people. If you make a mistake on its usage, it can easily take a person's life, which leads to a great amount of sorrow and sadness. And eventually causes a war. Still, will you wield that child?" (Cruzer)

"Of course. I will subjugate my enemy because that's my intention. And besides, weapons are not only for hurting people, isn't that right? I told you earlier that the weapon's purpose is entirely based on the prudence of the wielder. And that's to protect the things important to you, you said so as well." (Hiiro)

".....it seems I've lost my rights to claim that child." (Cruzer)

"At the very least, this guy has been helpful a lot of times, piercing every hindrance in my path." (Hiiro)

"I see...your path." (Cruzer)

"Yeah, even I am not fond of cutting people for leisure. However, if it prevents me from reaching my path, then I will have to push through with all my strength." (Hiiro)

"Even if you are going to kill a person?" (Cruzer)

"I have already prepared for that." (Hiiro)

Cruzer stared at him without batting an eyelid.

“To protect the path I’m taking, I will swing this guy...《Zangeki》”

“You’re right! Me and 《Zangeki-chan》 will stay with Hiiro for a looong time.”
(Tenn)

Tenn shows Cruzer a victory pose. Hiiro doesn’t care what he’s doing but instead wishes that monkey would come off from his shoulder. Then as if he read his mind, Tenn jumped from his shoulders and,

“Besides lad,《Zangeki-chan》 isn’t sad when Hiiro is fighting you know. That alone I can assure you of my words!” (Tenn)

Thonk!

“Ouch! What was that for!” (Tenn)

“Don’t come out all of a sudden you Yellow Monkey.” (Hiiro)

(TL Note: Apparently Hiiro calls Tenn with nickname, 黄ザル (Kizaru). Tell me if Yellow Monkey is wrong or not.)

“What’s so wrong about that! I have fused with 《Zangeki-chan》! So isn’t his story, my story too!” (Tenn)

Thonk!

“Why did you hit me again!” (Tenn)

Tenn takes a distance from Hiiro as he rub his head with teary eyes.

“Just be quiet. Even without you telling me, I will continue to believe as long as this sword believes me.” (Hiiro)

In that moment, Cruzer opened his eyes brightly and entrusted a kind smile to them.

“I see, it seems 《Zangeki》 has apparently found a good master.” (Cruzer)

Then he turned his directions to Liliyn as he quietly lowered his head. At first, Liliyn was bewildered by such action, but immediately relaxes her face when she understood its significance.

"Liliyn-san, the dream you want accomplish, let this foolish one be a part of it too. No, let me assist in it too." (Cruzer)

".....umu. Then I expect you to do your best Cruzer!" (Liliyn)

Liliyn also smiles in delight as she made a satisfied nod. Silva and Shamoe similarly nodded as if they felt Liliyn's happiness as well.

Chapter 236 - Solicitation Success

The result of Hiiro's visit was completely a success as derived by Liliyn. She thought it would take a lot more time, but even she didn't expect that at the mention of Cruzer's daughter, would wonderfully make an impact in their solicitation to Cruzer.

"It was a success milady." (Silva)

Silva whispered those words to her.

"Umu, who could have thought that I would see the day Cruzer finally breaks from his isolation." (Liliyn)

"Nofofo, it truly was beyond our expectations, wasn't it?" (Silva)

"Yeah, but we still have a problem.." (Liliyn)

Although she was glad that Cruzer would support her dreams once again, she was uneasy about Cruzer going out so easily even if he disguises as much as he can.

There was a high possibility that problems will emerge if someone who knows Cruzer finds out his true identity.

And Cruzer seems to be concerned about this too,

"I have a small worry about something. Probably an obstacle. Is it alright to speak?" (Cruzer)

Of course, that obstacle was also the problem in their past.

"I may be skilled in disguise, but there is a possibility that my identity would be found out. However, I decided to help Liliyn's dream once again so I cannot stay in this place forever. What do you suppose I should do?" (Cruzer)

While everyone was thinking about the solution about this,

"Isn't that too easy?" (Hiiro)

Because Hiiro spoke those words in a mild sense, they who was racking their brains in worry, stiffened in surprise.

Especially Liliyn who hit upon the solution to their problem,

“That’s right! Why didn’t I think of that! We have an outrageous irregular magic user in here!” (Liliyn)

Even though she was also an irregular magic user, no one tried to thrust that fact to her.

“B-but, wait a minute...Hiiro, are you sure you want to do this?” (Liliyn)

“I don’t mind really. I do have a loan to that guy. I’m just returning the favor back.” (Hiiro)

It seems the loan was from Winkaa, Cruzer’s daughter. She did not know what kind of loan he borrowed from her, but it was surely big as proof of his consent just now.

“Hmm.. since we are in the demon continent, let’s make it an『Evila』” (Hiiro)

Hiiro turned his gaze to Cruzer while saying so,

“Eh? Err...what do you mean by...that?” (Cruzer)

Of course, other than Cruzer, everyone understood what Hiiro was naturally going to do.

“Cruzer” (Liliyn)

“Liliyn-san...” (Cruzer)

“Just stay still. Something interesting will happen.” (Liliyn)

The corners of her mouth raised like an amused child. However, Cruzer was still uneasy about it and turned his glance to Silva. A face asking for help.

“Nofofofofo! It’s going to be alright!” (Silva)

“E-err, if possible I would like an explanation for this!” (Cruzer)

“Fu, everyone, hold this guy in place!” (Liliyn)

When Liliyn points her finger to Cruzer,

“Eh? What are you trying to do to me!?” (Cruzer)

Nikki held his left arm, Mikazuki held his right arm, while Camus bound him with his arms from Cruzer’s back.

“Do it Hiiro!” (Liliyn)

“...you don’t have to exaggeratedly do this you know. Oh well, here I go.”
(Hiiro)

Hiiro aimed the written character 『Transform』 to Cruzer.

“Eh...what...is...that..” (Cruzer)

Hiiro ignored Cruzer and shot the character. It hits on Cruzer’s forehead.

Then, a warm pale light wraps him. It doesn’t take long for the light to gradually dim out, and someone appeared from that place.

“Umu, you are now a splendid 『Evila』, Cruzer! Kuhaha!” (Liliyn)

“Eh? Eh? Huh?” (Cruzer)

“Please take this Cruzer-dono” (Silva)

Silva gave Cruzer a hand mirror who was puzzled by their reactions. For the time being, he took the mirror and timidly confirmed his reflection.

“.....eh?” (Cruzer)

.....

.....

.....

.....

“Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeh!?” (Cruzer)

What was reflected on the mirror was his pointed ears, darkish skin, and purple hair. Three-pronged horns were visible on his forehead. He was exactly like a 『Evila』

The existence of his fluffy tail, his smooth yellow hair, and his beast ears all vanished splendidly.

“Kuhahaha! It suits you, Cruzer!” (Liliyn)

“I agree, from head to toe, you look like a genuine 『Evila』!” (Silva)

Liliyn and Silva happily expressed their delight, while Cruzer was still trying to

understand what happened.

“....t-this is....unique magic, right?” (Cruzer)

“Heh, so you noticed already. If you want to hear the full details, ask Hiiro. If he’s in the mood to tell you, that is!” (Liliyn)

Cruzer followed her words and faced Hiiro.

“Hm? Don’t worry, you won’t return to your original form even if the magic is nullified. If you want to change back, tell me and I will release it.”

“E-err, I understand.” (Cruzer)

For the time being, Cruzer seemed to be relieved now that he can go outside without any problems.

There was no appearance of Cruzer who was their new companion when Hiiro and the others returned to the castle. As requested by Cruzer, he would like to tidy up his old home, the【Shanjumon Cave】and may take a little while.

Since Liliyn wasn’t in a hurry, she prepared for Cruzer’s arrival at the castle.

When she told Demon Lord Eveam about Cruzer, Eveam requested Liliyn to guide him to the rooms allotted for Hiiro’s companions.

After finishing the final procedures for Cruzer, Liliyn cheerfully returned to her room. Why is she like that, you ask? Simple. They were able to solicit Cruzer in just a day which she deemed the task impossible for her alone.

Alcohol was prepared by Silva. It felt surreal though for a little girl bathing in the ecstasy of alcohol as she gulped one bottle after another. Eventually, she fell asleep after that.

The next day, that little girl pleaded to cure her headache with magic which Hiiro naturally rejected of course, and notified Silva about his departure.

“Where are you going to?” (Silva)

“Oh, I have some things to do on the【Beast Kingdom】” (Hiiro)

Though Silva was surprised a little, he did not pry any details about it and sent him off quietly. Times like this is where Silva shines as an excellent personnel of Liliyn.

Mikazuki and Nikki went to shopping with Shamoe. Liliyn suffers from the hangover while Silva nurses her. Therefore, only three people, no, two people and one animal could freely move now, Hiiro, Camus, and Tenn.

Besides Tenn, although he told Camus to look after the room, the latter stubbornly wished to accompany him in his travels and Hiiro eventually permitted it.

He then proceeded to go to Demon Lord Eveam, and found out that she was talking with Aquinas at her office.

Hiiro was guided by her maid, knocks on the door, and came in. When they heard her consent, Hiiro, Camus and Tenn entered the room as well.

“What’s the matter Hiiro? If you are here because of the person named Cruzer, I have already looked over the report a little while ago?” (Eveam)

Eveam first said those words after not seeing each other for a long time. He noticed her exhaustion fading in and out from her. If he was not mistaken, they seemed to be at the stage of advancing the 『Permanent Alliance』 coalition. Although they had a verbal agreement at the duel event before, they are now dealing the problems in the political side of each country.

Because of that, she spends her days hastily dealing with the problem to the point of sleeping in between her work hours.

Although she wore a thin makeup, it did not completely hide her exhaustion.

So right now is a perfect time to do it. But he wasn’t going to try and get involved in the politics of 『Evila』, he was an outsider after all.

He was going to pretend he didn’t see anything and pretend to report something to her.

“It’s not for that reason. I just want to report that we will stay at the 【Beast Kingdom】for a few days there. So we might take a while.” (Hiiro)

“Is that so? But what — even if I ask you won’t tell me right?” (Eveam)

Since she understood Hiiro’s character well, she gave up questioning him and shrugged her shoulders.

(Am I really that secretive in their impression?)

Though Hiiro wasn't alright being easily read by someone, there were times it saved him from the extra labor of doing the explanations.

"Nope, I'm just reporting because I've been indebted to this place. And for my reasons about my departure, it's not really that of a big deal." (Hiiro)

Hiiro and his companions had rented the large rooms in the Demon Lord's castle and are now living in there. Of course, the biggest reason why he was indebted to this place was because of Musun's tasty dishes, and the baths they had allowed him to do so with abandon.

And since he was going to an allied country of 『Evila』, he might as well tell the reason for his departure.

"I-is that so?" (Eveam)

In face of his honest answer, Eveam blinks many times in surprise. And Aquinas, as usual, doesn't show much reaction to it.

"This guy and also that animal will be coming too." (Hiiro)

"Hey, Hiiro! Count me as a person, sheesh!" (Tenn)

Eveam had a blank look when she saw Tenn jump on his shoulders and suddenly talked to him. It seems he forgot to tell her that this was his contracted 『Spirit』.

"W-w-where did that animal came from?" (Eveam)

Even though Eveam asked in surprise about it,

"....I see, a 『Spirit』. Hiiro, are you perhaps contracted to it?" (Aquinas)

As expected of Aquinas. With just one look, he not only saw its real identity but even their contract as well.

"Yeah. This is Tenn the Yellow Monkey." (Hiiro)

"Wrong! You're the only one who calls me by that name!" (Tenn)

"Fine. Then, Yellow Monkey." (Hiiro)

"....haa, I give up. Anyway, best regards here Maou-chan and his companion." (Tenn)

Tenn realized that there was no way he can convince Hiiro, so he just dejectedly dropped his shoulders and called out to Eveam.

“C-contracted? Hiiro how far are you going to surprise me....haa, might as well not say anything about it. Anyway, I haven’t heard the reason for your departure to the beast kingdom?” (Eveam)

“It’s about the blacksmith master actually.” (Hiiro)

“Ah, the person called Cruzer then?” (Eveam)

“Yup. I just want to tell them that I met the blacksmith master.” (Hiiro)

“And who is ‘them’?” (Eveam)

“My former travel companions.” (Hiiro)

“...I see.” (Eveam)

Eveam imagined Arnold and the others who were happily talking with Hiiro since the duel incident.

“I see, so it’s only for that sake you are going over there?” (Eveam)

“....hm... ah, it’s also the perfect time to have that Beast King pay his debts to me.” (Hiiro)

“Don’t get yourself into trouble, alright?” (Eveam)

Though Eveam changed the tone of her voice,

“Trouble? I don’t care about that. I just do what I want to do.” (Hiiro)

Eveam could only sigh in face of Hiiro’s ignorance to her warning, even though she knew full well how outrageous he is compared to the norm.

“Hiiro, do you know that 【Beast Kingdom】 are in the midst of a crisis right now?” (Eveam)

“A crisis you say?” (Hiiro)

Based from Eveam, it seems 【Pacion】 was attacked by two black robed people. It was suspected those people were subordinates of Avoros.

“I see. That Template Maou seems to be moving a lot of things recently.” (Hiiro)

"T-template? A-anyway, because that's the situation on the other side, better be cautious over there." (Eveam)

Certainly, if such is the condition of 【Pasion】 right now, it would surely be tense. A little provocation might cause some big trouble over there.

"A-although the soldiers over there knows about Hiiro's reputation as a hero, you should still be careful, because the one who attacked 【Pasion】 were a beast manand a human." (Eveam)

"A human?" (Hiiro)

"Yes, that's why Hiiro who is also a 【Humas】 shouldn't reveal his true identity over there." (Eveam)

"I see. Thanks for the information, Maou." (Hiiro)

"Your welcome. Though there's no reason to get worried about your safety since it's you. Still, be careful out there, Hiiro." (Eveam)

When he returned a slight nod in response and retreated to the door, Eveam leaked a heavy sigh. It didn't sound natural for a woman in her adolescence, but it sounded like a middle-aged guy pounded down by the accumulated stress from work.

Hiiro stopped his steps the moment he finished writing the character and quickly shot it straight to Eveam.

Aquinas who noticed his intention from the beginning, just watched silently without interfering with Hiiro's actions.

"Eh!? W-what is this?" (Eveam)

Eveam who was hit by a mass of magic began to panic. She saw the appearance of Hiiro pointing his fingertip at her presence.

The moment she understood that this was his work, warm light gently wraps her body. Then, a pleasant sensation followed through.

The sensation was similar to the time she drank a warm soup as heat spreads out from the back of her body.

The gentle heat spread throughout her body and she felt a floating sensation

as if she was in a dream. A dream in the midst of springtime as a pleasant wind passed through her body.

In the surroundings, animals ran happily in the field, and the sky showed its clarity with no clouds at all.

(What is this feeling....it's very pleasant..)

The consciousness of Eveam quietly dimmed out while being wrapped by the warm light.

“You have my gratitude Hiiro” (Aquinas)

Aquinas said those words as he saw Eveam sleeping on the desk.

“She had been working for a long time, and won’t listen even if you tell her to rest.” (Aquinas)

“Seems likely. Even I noticed the bags under her eyes despite her consistent make-up.” (Hiiro)

“Although we are in a critical stage where various problems might occur here and there, it’s much more troublesome if her body breaks down first.” (Aquinas)

“Don’t worry about it. I gave that to her as consideration for the information she gave me a while ago.” (Hiiro)

“Fu, then I’ll leave it at that.” (Aquinas)

Aquinas stared at Eveam comfortably sleeping with kind eyes as Hiiro’s 『Pleasant Sleep』|『快眠』 was in effect. It felt as if a father was gently looking at his daughter.

“Aren’t you also supporting her? Then you should teach her some discipline about it. Letting her do as she wishes to the point of succumbing to this is a disqualification as an aide of hers you know?” (Hiiro)

“It hurts when you say it like that” (Aquinas)

Because he had nothing else to say to him, Hiiro tried to get out of the room this time.

“You have my gratitude Hiiro” (Aquinas)

“...don’t say it twice.” (Hiiro)

The door closed with a soft click, and it became a room with Aquinas and a girl sleeping inside.

“Though that guy won’t recognize it, he had already become a significant existence for the 『Evila』...no, that’s not right, he’s become an irreplaceable existence for this Sleeping Beauty.” (Aquinas)

A quiet mumble resounded in the room, but it didn’t have a lonely tone of voice, rather it sounded more gentle and warm.

Chapter 237 - Visit to Passion

After the immediate use of the『Transfer』character, Hiiro, Camus and Tenn arrived at the heart of the Beast kingdom, 【Passion】

And in that instant, the scenery that greeted them was obviously different from the time Hiiro last came to this place. It seemed a fight had occurred in this place based on the surmisable cuts that remained on the trees.

He somehow understood based on the cut that the enemy was quite skillful with the usage of the blade.

His colleague once told him that the trees used by the people in here have a considerable degree of hardness and flexibility so a half-baked attack won't manage to damage the trees.

And yet, the cut that was evident in the trees was too clean as if the blade smoothly cut without much resistance from the tree's surface. The cause could be a skill of the enemy or the weapon wielded, or maybe both.

If the weapon was dull, it won't be able to cut even a tofu. And even if it was a fine weapon, it was impossible to execute such stunning cuts present.

“The person who did is...strong.”

Camus seemed to have arrived the same answer as his. Incidentally, Camus appearance right now was a beast man using the『Transform』character.

He also changed his appearance to his former beast man look in accordance to Eveam's advice of not causing any reckless provocations. His appearance was the same as Muir in the past, a silver-haired beast man, and similarly, Camus had the same traits as well. At first glance, they seem like brothers—no, brother and sister.

“I agree. But the most surprising of all is...”

Hiiro turned his gaze in the direction of the big tree towering over the center of the city. The 《Aragorn》, the reigning symbol of the country. It was the biggest and most unusual change of them all.

The tree that was supposed to be overflowing with life, now only felt as if it was abandoned for several hundred of years, only a shadow of its past was left for them to see.

The warm greenery he usually see was gone and the roots scattered all over were so fragile that it could break any moment.

“I see. So this is the trouble she was talking about.”

All of them were staring at cruel depiction of the big tree when,

“Hiiro-san?”

Being called by his name, he could only react to it. Among the people he saw, one of his former travel companions was there.

“Long time no see, Chibi.”

“Hiiro-san!”

Muir Casteir. The lovely silver haired human beast. She was his first travel companion.

“Eh!? W-why are you doing here Hiiro-san? I-is this a dream? Am I dreaming... auu!”

Because she was getting carried away, Hiiro poked her forehead lightly.

“Uuu... so it really is Hiiro-san.”

“Naturally. Who did you think I was?”

“...ehehe, that manner of talking, I guess I wasn’t mistaken.”

But her bright expression soon turned into a serious expression again.

“B-by the way, why did you come here in 【Passion】?”

“Ah, about that...wait, you aren’t with that old man?”

“If you are looking for Oji-san, he is at 《Ouki》”

“《Ouki》? Ah, the large tree where that king resides.”

“Yes. Do you perhaps have some business with Ojisan?”

“And also to you.”

“Eh? Me too?”

Muir had a puzzled expression. She was probably recalling anything that serves the reason for his arrival.

“Anyway, I’ll tell it to you later. For now, bring me to that old man.”

“I-I understand!”

And so, Muir guided them to their destination, 《Ouki》. While they were en route, Muir faced Camus who was always behind Hiiro.

“Is, err, Camus-san fine to call you?”

“Un... Camus is fine.”

“Let me introduce myself again, I’m Muir Casteir.”

“Yeah...best regards.”

Though Camus responded with his emotionless expression, Muir, however, felt relieved for being able to properly introduce herself.

And then, her eyes wandered on the animal on Hiiro’s shoulder. She was fidgeting, hesitating how to ask about it.

“Little miss, if you are anxious, just ask so. I don’t mind”

“Fuwa!?”

Well, for an animal to begin talking like that, of course, anyone would be surprised. Muir closed and opened her mouth, lost in her own confusion as she hardened stand still.

Then, while in that trance, Tenn jumped lightly aiming towards Muir which the latter caught him in a panic with her hands.

“Oh! Nice catch!”

“Um, thanks. I guess.”

Muir looked at Hiiro with upturned eyes, gesturing him for an explanation.

“If you want an explanation, that guy can do it.”

As he said so, he began to walk ahead of them.

“Then, you don’t mind me being your partner, for now, little miss?”

"Um, I'm fine with it."

《Ouki》was a large complex that consisted of overlapping big trees renovated as a residential area. Being able to see this place once again, Hiiro could only sigh once again.

They were immediately stopped by a soldier who seems to be the gatekeeper of 《Ouki》. However, they were soon granted permission inside due to Muir's help.

《Ouki》wasn't entirely damaged as compared to the scene before outside. According to Muir, the trees of 《Ouki》had a self-restoration ability which was why the damage on this place was less visible and more rejuvenated to its former glory.

Hiiro only heard this information for the first time, as he once assumed that the cause of the trees brimming life was due to the favor of 《Aragorn》

Then they arrived at the wide open area inside the 《Ouki》. It seems to be the training ground for the soldiers of the country as he saw some familiar faces among them.

"Hm? You...why are you here!?"

One of those was the 《Gabranth Three》Bard, the birdman with splendid wings who raised his voice the moment he noticed Hiiro.

Of course, Bard's reaction to his appearance was natural. Hiiro was after all the one who overwhelmingly defeated him and his companions when they confronted in the duel. Naturally, so was his cautious stance against Hiiro.

"For what purpose did you come here!"

Before their hostility turned into a fight, Muir explained that Hiiro had come here in order to talk to his comrades.

"....you really are a liberal person who does as you pleases."

Bard took the explanation so easily, he seems to be busy with a lot of things. Probably regarding the state of the country.

Then, Hiiro heard footsteps storming closer and closer to his location. And then gradually, the cause of it appeared.

“Hirooooooooooo!”

The owner of that voice suddenly hurled her black body into the air falling towards Hiiro’s location.

“Uuuu! I wasn’t mistaken when I smelled that nostalgic scent! Hiiro! I missed you so much nya! “

And as that person landed, she rubbed her head against the other and clung to him hard. She slowly raised her face and,

“Nya!?”

“Crouch! You are hurting me!”

The face she saw was Bard. It was Bard instead of Hiiro that Crouch had clung to.

“H-how could this happen-ya!? Did you transform into Bard, Hiiro!?”

“I’m the real Bard you idiot!”

Crouch immediately took a distance from Bard.

“Eeeh!? Then that means Bard was all along that one I love nya!? That’s troubling!?”

“How did you arrive at that conclusion!”

“Unconscious love!?”

“Ah forget this! I don’t want to deal any more problem than this!”

While the two were having their noisy conversation, Hiiro’s group watched them with cold eyes.

“Hiiro-san, did you perhaps use magic?”

“Yup. I feel bad for the birdman, though, he became my scapegoat.”

Going back to that moment, Hiiro immediately used the character 『Shift | 交代』. It has the effect of arbitrarily choosing a partner to exchange places with him. Unfortunately, Bard was the victim chosen nearby, because of the magic’s range limitation.

“Hiroooooo!”

Once again, Crouch aimed for Hiiro again, her expression saying she won't fail this time. Hiiro in response stretched his one hand towards her,

"Wait a minute cat girl."

Crouch halted her assault when he heard Hiiro's voice.

"Nya? What's wrong nya?"

"Listen well cat girl, look over there. You will see something interesting."

"Eh? Where is it nya? You are not planning to escape again nya?"

She removed her gaze from Hiiro and looked at her right. Then, her head swayed a bit, power seems to have left her eyes as it slowly closed quietly...

"Ku~"

Her body curled up and slept as it is.

(.....it's a good thing this guy is a simpleton)

Hiiro used magic again, this time the effect of the character 『Drowsy | 眠』. Just looking at her, Hiiro couldn't believe he once fought her intensely in a battle.

Though her original appearance that time was a black panther when he fought Crouch, her image right now was a lovely little girl who had a pure white hair that was as white as snow.

"H-Hiiro, don't you have anything to say to me?"

Bard gets up as he glared at Hiiro with a big vein on his forehead.

"Oh, so you were safe, birdman?"

".....haa, I give up. There's no hope convincing you of anything."

He seemed to have understood Hiiro's character and silently gave up without any objections.

"Well, greetings aside. You have it rough too huh? Being her relative."

"....."

Bard had a worried expression. Crouch was certainly a beast man and one of the 『Gabranth Three』, so it might inevitable that Bard who is the leader of

them all gets the responsibility of their mess.

When Bard looked at Crouch happily dozing off, he could only leak an amazed sigh.

“Anyway, you were looking for Arnold I remember. He’s in the garden.”

“Garden?”

“Ah Hiiro-san, it is the place where you first met Mimiru-chan”

Hiiro nods a little. He felt like wanting to see the flowers in there. It might surely be a place pleasant for reading a book.

“Let’s go then.”

Hiiro started to walk ahead of them when Bard called Muir.

“Muir.”

“Yes?”

“Mimiru should be in her room right now.”

Bard glanced at the small figure of Hiiro ahead.

“I’m sure she’d be delighted to know.”

“Ah! I understand!”

Bard faintly returned a smile and went back to his work.

Chapter 238 - The Tragedy After their Delightful Reunion

Hiiro faced the garden with Camus and Tenn in tow. Why was Muir not present? That's because she went towards Mimiru to notify her about his arrival.

So they separated with Muir and Hiiro brazenly proceeded towards the garden he had gone to before.

There was no change like from before. A sweet scent of aroma drifted from numerous flowers, and the pleasant wind faintly brushing his cheeks felt relaxing.

The sky was clear when looked above. No one would have thought that this country was attacked with such a relaxing view of the sky.

Camus and Tenn felt similarly and shut their eyes to cherish the pleasant moment. However, they did not come here to sunbathe.

He looked for Arnold who was his reason for coming here and saw him watering the flowerbed not far from here.

Looking closely, he seemed to be placing a small bamboo inside the flowering pot, it looks he's planting medical herbs.

"Hey old man."

Hiiro brazenly called out to him despite Arnold in the midst of his work, full concentration and awareness on the plant.

"Hah? Sorry, I'm busy so I don't have time to....oh? I see. So it's Hiiro. I'll talk to you later after thi..... wait, Hiirooooooo!?"

Arnold opened his mouth as if his jaw got dislocated in surprise. Hiiro thought this guy hasn't changed one bit.

"W-w-why are you here? Wait, you are Hiiro right?"

"I don't need to answer that. So? What's with that getup?"

Arnold's current appearance was wearing white straw bonnet weaved on his head.

"Hm? Ah, this is the work clothes Kukulia-sama lent me to wear."

"Hey Arnold, aren't you done with it yet! We need to bring the medicinal plants as soon...eh?"

The person that barged in and called out to Arnold was.... The first princess, Kukulia King.

And, from behind was,

"What seems to be the problem, Kukulia-anesama?"

That soothing voice came from Mimiru. Apparently, Muir was also tagging along with them.

Muir explained why Hiiro had come to 《Ouki》

"Hee, so what was it that you want to tell us about?"

"Wait a minute Arnold, we need to bring the medicinal plants first."

"Ah, I forgot about that. We should do so or else I'll get another hit from my sister."

For the time being, the talk was put on hold and they tagged along with Arnold to do his work.

According to him, the chief maid, Arnold's sister was taking a rest in her own room.

"Did something happen?"

Hiiro asked Arnold as they walked which the latter expressed a wry smile in response to his question.

"Well, it seems that my sister was injured in the battle with the assassin of the Predecessor Demon Lord"

"....I didn't know your sister was that strong?"

"Hmm, she's stronger than any of the average soldiers in here. Even I couldn't win back at her."

Even though you haven't won against me yet, Hiiro held back retorting him.

"However, her partner that time was much stronger. You saw the situation outside right?"

"Yeah."

"It seems to be the doing of that same person as well. Aside from 『Aragorn』 of course, one of his companions blighted it."

When the assassin appeared in front of the queen, Blantha King, Raive came in and protected her, however, the opponent was outside of her expectations and sustained severe injuries on both of her arms.

"....say Hiiro, I have a favor."

"You want me to cure her wounds right?"

".....you can't do it?"

Arnold understands Hiiro's character well. He won't move unless there was something for him. He understood that Hiiro will demand something in consideration of his favor.

(So that's why he had a conflicted expression)

"Sure. I don't mind."

"Re-really!?"

"However."

"Ah, I knew this was coming."

Somehow Arnold expected it and felt a little depressed.

"In compensation, I want to eat your cooking once again."

".....you really are a strange guy."

Hiiro's demand made Arnold amazed. He felt a lump in his throat and made wry smile in response to his.

"You really haven't changed a bit."

Both of Raive's arms was covered in a pale blue light. All of the members present was watching the spectacle unfolding.

"Heh, this feels really warm."

Raive expressed a relieved expression as she cherished the warm feeling flowing in her arms. The pale light eventually dimmed and got absorbed inside her arms.

The arms of Raive rejuvenated in that moment. The complexion had a healthy glow again, the burnt skin has vanished and sore pain awhile ago had been remedied away.

"Wow! Even the pain is gone! Ahaha! You really are amazing!"

Raive returned a bright smile to Hiiro in response to the recovery of her arms.

"Thanks a lot, lad. Now I can return back to work with this!"

"Hey sister, you just got recovered you know, shouldn't you rest just for this day?"

"Don't speak of foolish things Arnold! I work because I love it! I live because I want to enjoy it to the fullest! You know that's my motto right?"

Raive happily said that as she placed a cigarette between her lips. Hiiro felt admiration to the boldness of Arnold's sister.

And then, Raive stood up facing Hiiro and bowed for accepting her treatment.

"I have heard a lot from you. Arnold, Muir and Mimiru talk about you a lot. You have my utmost gratitude. Thank you for curing my arm."

"No need. Because I have received the payment for it."

"Ah, about that, instead of that cowardly idiot's cooking, would you like to try my own cooking?"

"I...idiot cooking..."

Apparently, Arnold was hurt by those words and dropped his shoulders heartbrokenly.

"You ok with it? It was the old man who accepted the commission you know?"

"It's fine really. You're the one who cured me anyway. Isn't it natural for me to return back the gratitude instead?"

That smile from Raive felt relieving somehow. It was a warmth that was like a light that wraps all darkness.

She seemed to have the same soft-heartedness like Arnold apparently.

(As expected of siblings...)

Immediately, Raive went towards Blantha to report her recovery.

With this, Hiiro can now finally get down with his business with Arnold and Muir. And as if they read his intention, Muir and Arnold stared at Hiiro as they recalled his purpose in here.

"Hiiro-san, please tell us what you were about to tell us before."

Hiiro responded to Muir's opening words.

"Well, it's not that of a big deal but.."

"Jeez, just say it quickly. Hm? Don't tell me you got yourself a girlfriend?"

But it was Arnold's mistake to say that. He talked without thinking of the consequences behind his spoken words. He noticed later a cold feeling tracing his spinal cord.

"Oji-san....."

"Arnold-san....."

A cold, demeaning aura pierced his back.

"That kind of joke...."

"Is not meant to be spoken in here, yes?"

Muir and Mimiru's usual facade was nowhere to be seen.

"Hiiiiiiii! m-m-my tongue just slipped, I'm sorry!"

Hiiro felt disappointed once again at the man in his thirties kneeling down on the ground to the two teenaged girls.

(He's really pitiful...)

Although Hiiro vaguely knew the reason for their cold reactions, Hiiro kept himself silent and quietly looked at Arnold like a bystander.

While they were at it, someone pulled the hems of Hiiro's sleeves. He reacted to it and was faced with an expressionless facade of Camus.

".....Hiiro"

"Yeah?"

"Why are Muir and her friend...angry?"

"Ah. Somehow those guys see me as their elder brother. So it won't be funny for them if that elder brother gets a girlfriend."

"Does Hiiro have a...girlfriend?"

"Of course I don't."

"...I see."

For some reason, Camus made a relieved expression. Is it possible that Camus was also seeing him as his elder brother?

(Well, he is my subordinate after all. It has the brotherly like feeling if I think of it that way.)

".....so Hiiro is a thickheaded one?"

Tenn murmured as if he couldn't believe what he discovered.

"As if I'm one. I'm not some Hero of who knows where he is right now"

Of course, that hero was Aoyama Taishi.

".....haa, those little miss'es sure have it rough."

Since he felt that they were wasting time, Hiiro went to the heart of the matter.

"Anyway, may I start now?"

Everyone stopped their clamor as their attention shifted at Hiiro's word.

"Alright. I'll start..."

"Eeh!? You found Wi's father!?"

"I-is that true Hiiro-san!?"

Hiiro talked about the matter of the other day about meeting Cruzer Jio. Muir

and Arnold also knew about Winkaa Jio's situation when they traveled together.

Before Hiiro parted with his companions, they promised to report each other if they ever find Winkaa's father.

Even Muir and Arnold were constantly worried about Winkaa, praying for her to find her father quickly every day.

Thus, they made such promise with each other. And since Hiiro was the first to discover her father by a spur of coincidence, he decided to inform his colleagues about it.

"I see. To think he was in that cave."

"Yes! Now we only need to tell Winkaa-san about this!"

"As for that one, I have already done it."

"Fast! Wait, I shouldn't be surprised by this level anymore."

Hiiro had already reported it to Winkaa. At first, she was dumbfounded by it, but since Winkaa knew Hiiro wouldn't lie in these sort of matters, she trusted him and heard the whereabouts of her father's location.

Apparently, she seemed to in the middle of a work she cannot abandon and only promised to go there after she was done with her task.

Of course, Hiiro also told Cruzer about Winkaa's safety which the later felt quite relieved hearing it. And promised to wait quietly until she comes for him.

"I'm so glad for Winkaa-san."

"I agree, it seems this day is a day for celebration!"

Mimiru and Kukulia heard the talk about Winkaa, and they both shed tears of joy for her.

"Hey Hiiro, if they ever get reunited once again, don't forget to call us alright?"

"Ah, p-please tell me too!"

"You sure you want to go to that cave?"

"Yeah! Our countries are allied nations after all!"

"I agree! I also want to meet Eu-chan as well!"

Eu was a shortened nickname for Eunice, who Muir faced in the duel incident and got friendly in the end.

"Well, if that time comes, I will do so."

Muir and Arnold exchanged glances with each other as they happily expressed their feelings. Mimiru and Kukulia looked at them with warm eyes.

However, all of a sudden, they heard a scream from somewhere. And then,

Dogaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!

In addition to the scream, a loud explosion roared. Everyone caught their breath when they headed outside in a panic and saw the scene before their very eyes.

"N-no way..."

A mutter came from Kukulia.

"《Aragorn》..... has fallen!?"

Chapter 239 - The Spirit Dwelling in the Tree

V2 - Corrections Applied

Gri - Green

Grin'oju - Greenage

Apparently,《Aragorn》 broke away from its trunk and had fallen over the people's residence.

Kukulia and Mimiru were pale in worry thinking of the people involved in the accident, fortunately, their worries were quelled when they received no reports of death among their citizens.

Numerous reports also stated that some people think this was a sign of bad omen to their country.

Though the tree had withered, the crash site wasn't something they couldn't ignore. It was still dangerous to leave it as it is.

Bard was also in the site, instructing his men to see if there are still civilians trapped by the incident. Since they couldn't leave 《Aragorn》 as it is, they tried to move it in some way.

However, the branch was considerably heavy making the task too difficult to accomplish. Beast King Leowald came also when he heard about the uproar.

Leowald made a sour face as he grasped the situation. After a while, he made light nod and made his decision.

"Yosh. I guess it's up to me to carry that tree away!"

"Is Leowald-sama alright with it?"

Bard was wide-eyed in astonishment. That was natural. 《Aragorn》 was the symbol of their country and the pride of beast men living in it.

Even if it withered due to the thief's hand, destroying the tree itself felt intimidating for the beast men.

"It can't be helped anymore. To our regrets, 《Aragorn》 is..."

Leowald did not continue but it was obvious based on his mortified expression. Even the soldiers felt this way, hoping that the tree is not dead yet.

One could understand based on their expressions how important 《Aragorn》 was for the people in this country.

“Say Hiiro, I’m going to go out for a bit, ok?”

Tenn seemed to have manifested on his shoulders and wished to get closer to 《Aragorn》

“Why?”

“I don’t know if it was my imagination, I think something is in there.”

“Something is in it? What do you mean?”

Tenn jumped off his shoulders and ran towards 《Aragorn》.

“Mu? What’s with this ape?”

Naturally, since it was their first time seeing Tenn, Leowald became suspicious of it, and Bard who was beside him,

“Ah, Aren’t you ape who’s with Hiiro!”

“Mu? Hiiro? Hiiro is here?”

Apparently, Leowald wasn’t notified yet of Hiiro’s arrival. Tenn ignores their conversation and begins to advance close to the tree. He looked around restlessly and then touched a part of the tree.

The moment Tenn touched it, something manifested on the roots of 《Aragorn》,

Pikaaaaaa....

A pillar of light shot above after.

“Wha!?”

“What are you doing ape!?”

Leowald was surprised while Bard was shouting at Tenn who was the trigger of that weird phenomenon. The light began to focus on one place.

The light gathered in the vicinity of the center that opened and a figure of

something came out.

“I knew it was you... Green”

Hiiro came behind Tenn who suddenly talked about some name he had not heard of.

“What is that guy?”

The one that had been called by Tenn, Green looked like something from a game. It has a big leaf on its head and its body is almost the same size as Tenn.

(TL Note: CELEBI!?)

Its clothes were also made of leaves like a nostalgic fantasy character. However, its expression looked haggard and exhausted.

In addition, it had droopy eyes as it slumped on the tree.

“Hiiro? Why are you here?”

Though Leowald asked him,

“I will talk about that later. I want to understand this situation first.”

“U-umu.”

Leowald recognized the priority of it and kept himself silent.

“This guy is the 『Spirit』 residing in this tree.”

Tenn jumped on his shoulder back as he explained the details about this 『Spirit』

“Though we call her by the nickname Green...”

“Nyu~, Greenage. Zzz”

Greenage turned at him with sleepy eyes as it said those words.

“Green, you once said you were going to live in some tree right?”

“Un~ that’s right~”

“So that tree was this one, huh?”

“Yup~ very cozy~”

According to Greenage, she had been eyeing on 《Aragorn》 for a long time

and made it her favorite home to stay.

However, this was different to the contract Hiiro and Tenn had. Simply put, the 『Spirit』 chose to descend into this realm and live inside it without permission.

Of course, there was a risk involving that kind of actions, having not enough of mana will surely mean their death, but Greenage still continued her plans and lived inside 《Aragorn》 until now.

But due to the traitor who withered 《Aragorn》, Greenage suffered considerable damage from it and was only able to move thanks to Tenn's assistance.

“Then that means 《Aragorn》is a 《Spirit Tree》?”

Tenn softly shook his head in response to Leowald's question.

“This guy in first place just decided to settle down in this tree, no formal contract has been established, so this cannot be considered a 《Spirit Tree》”

“Yup~ Greenage hasn't contracted with anyone yet~”

“Anyway, since you came out of the tree safe, does that mean the tree is still alive?”

Then, Greenage showed an expression that was obviously a look of sadness. She started sniffing like a spoiled child and then,

“....uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

Everyone felt speechless when the 『Spirit』 suddenly burst out in tears.

“I hate that person who did this~!”

“That person?”

Though Tenn asked back,

“A human~! Moreover, a person from another world~!”

Hiiro was shocked by those words the most. He then recalled what Avoros said in the duel incident about having abducted the hero.

And then, the assassins who assaulted this place wore black clothing, very

similar to what Avoros's subordinate wears. In other words...

(Don't tell me that guy joined them...?)

Aoyama Taishi and Chika Suzumiya were the only two people missing about the four. In short, either of the two, but Hiyo could guess Taishi was the one who brought forth this current situation.

(What the heck is that guy thinking?)

Or maybe there was a reason for this. That guy is an obstinate guy who spreads his worldly justice of saving people even if they are beastmen. If that's the case, he was being forced to do something?

And guessing it based on Avoros's character then,

(...one more person. He's using a hostage to manipulate him.)

It seemed to be the closest guess he could make. That stubborn justice guy won't just work for that Demon Lord.

Especially after that war. That guy must have recognized that his values were too naive. Surely, that guy won't do something stupid after realizing his mistakes.

The possibility he arrived was that there is a risk regarding the life of the other missing person, Chika. In the case of him, he would definitely save Chika's life no matter what the cost.

Only Chika was the only one supporting him right now. Losing her would be very painful for Taishi.

Hiyo did not know if there were any romantic feelings involved, but if what he thought of is right, then that guy will only move with that reason in mind.

(I see, so that guy is being forced to do something in contrary to his ideals. That's rough...)

Hiyo sympathized with him a little because he really was a little pitiful. Even if another otherworldly person experienced that, they would also surely do the same.

(It's good that those two were separated from them...)

Those two were Shuri and Shinobu.

(In the end, whatever those guys will do...well, who cares? Not my problem)

How will those four move based on this? And what will happen to them? Hiiro didn't bother to think about it anymore.

Chapter 240 - The Dagger that killed Aragorn

“Uu~ even though I have gone great lengths to find such a fantastic home, mu~”

Despite Greenage grumbling, Tenn inquired further about the said matter.

“Does that mean the tree is dead?”

“.....yes~”

Greenage cast her eyes downward. Having her own place disappear was quite depressing for her. That tree must be of great importance to her.

However, not only was Greenage the one affected by it, the beast men who heard about it also felt great sorrow.

“I knew it...《Aragorn》is really dead...”

“Papa”

“Otou-sama”

Kukulia and Mimiru felt the same way to Leowald's grievous mutter. However, Muir who was nearby became taken aback as if an idea hit her and looked up at Hiiro.

“H-Hiiro-san!”

“.....what?”

“Um..you see...can Hiiro-san...um...you know...”

“It's impossible.”

“....eh?”

She hardened from his unexpected words, but Hiiro knew what she wanted to ask.

“You wanted me to revive this tree right?”

“Y-yes.”

“H-Hiiro! Is that true!”

It was Leowald who snapped at it. Although he doesn't understand what all of them felt, Hiiro decided to speak honestly.

"My magic is certainly versatile. However, even my magic has something it can't do."

"And that is?"

"The power to manipulate a person's life."

"....."

"Well, there are other things I could do though. I just don't know if it'll work"

"Then! You can revive 《Aragorn》!?"

"Don't misunderstand me Chibi, what I'm trying to say is that those who died, can't be revived."

"Ah."

"I don't have the power to revive something that is dead. I can't even write a character on them."

"I...see"

"Well, if it was damaged only, I could probably restore it back to its natural form."

"So it is impossible to restore it?"

"If we find a part of it that's still alive, I can. But this guy is too late."

As if darkness had descended on them, every beast men present were dispirited by their faint hope.

Hiiro had actually tried reviving something from the dead. He was unable to write any characters related to revival or resurrection even if he tried imagining what kind of effect he was trying to conjure.

On the contrary, the moment he tried doing it, he was assailed by an afflicting pain for trying such magic.

Even if he had leveled up, whether he raised his potential or pouring a sufficient amount of mana, a similar reaction occurred, he was afflicted by pain

again.

If the tree was suffering from severe damage however, if there was still life on its roots, he may be able to heal it back to its former state, but reviving something completely from the dead was not possible.

(I can't even write any character related to life...)

Nevertheless, Hiiro decided it was good if he can't. If life could be revived easily by magic, then it only degrades the true value of life itself.

"In any case, something that's dead is impossible for me. Give up on that idea."

Due to Hiiro's cold words, he felt a sharp glance on him and saw Bard looking at him with such look.

"Hiiro, you might not understand what we feel, but this tree is..."

"Yeah yeah, I know the gist of what you're going to say."

"Wha!? You!"

"Do you think it's for the best to continuing regretting about it than reflecting on it and trying to move on?"

"Ku.."

"How important this tree is to you guys, I don't know anything about that. However, you can't do anything to something that has happened already."

"B-but the people aren't so easy to forget something about what's important to them!"

"I agree with that. That's why I don't think mourning for it is bad."

"Hah?"

"What I'm trying to say is that it's alright to keep that sadness in your heart. I can see that that tree is very important to you guys. However, it will only hurt you if you keep it as it is."

He shrugged shoulders when he saw the large tree squashing the numerous small trees beneath it.

"Even the Beast King thought of it, he said that he would carry the tree out of the way right?"

Leowald responded with a nod when he shifted his attention to him.

"It's as Hiiro says. 『Aragorn』 is certainly our pride whether it died or not. That's why for this reason that I cannot leave it as it is. As a proud Gabranth, I would hold a proper burial and express my gratitude to it!"

Everyone raised their voice in response to Leowald's words. As expected, despite their loud roars, it was quite heart warming. What a noisy race they are.

At Leowald's command, several people retrieved the small wooden trees crushed by the large tree.

"By the way, Leaf."

"Leaf~? My name is Green you know~?"

Her expression had somehow improved from before although there were still traces of exhaustion visible on her face.

"Why did you not stop the attacks of the assailants if you value this tree so much?"

It's the same as Tenn and Silva. If the 『Spirit』 desires so, they can manifest their powers physically in accordance to their intentions.

"Ah, about that, she can't, Hiiro."

It was Tenn who answered him.

"What do you mean by that?"

"You see..."

Green to begin with wasn't a 『High-Ranking Spirit』 like Silva and Tenn. Although they can speak in human languages, they don't have the disposition to attack, much less, touch a human.

Moreover, since she was sharing her powers with 『Aragorn』 without a contract, most of her attention was on tree, so it was impossible for her to resist the enemy's attacks.

According to Tenn, the knife Taishi stabbed on the tree was quite blighted

making Greenage less weaker.

“Knife?”

“Yup~ it’s the knife that otherworldly person stabbed on my home~. The vitality of the tree lost all at once~”

“.....Blue Ribbons, do you know something about this?”

He thought Mimiru might be more detailed about this matter.

“Ah, yes. That knife was recovered by Oto-sama, and it should be with Yuhito-san at this moment.”

“Yuhito? Who was he again?

“Yuhito is our top researcher in this country. He’s also Rarashik’s brother.”

At Kukulia’s helpful information, Hiiro remembered now who he was. As far as the duel was concerned, he was the guy who Hiiro found interesting in the way he fought. A bespectacled rabbit-man wearing a white lab coat.

Perhaps they entrusted the knife to Yuhito to find out what kind of principle had extinguished the life of the big tree.

“I see. Now then, what are you going to do now Leaf? For a 『Spirit』 without contract, you can’t stay long in here or else you’ll die you know?”

“You’re right~ I should probably return to the forest~”

She’s probably talking about the 【Spirit Forest】. Tenn who heard that said,

“I see. Tell Pops my regards, ‘kay?”

“Un~, sure~”

The body of Greenage gradually became transparent after those words. After a few seconds, her figure was long gone.

She must have returned to the 【Spirit Forest】already

Arnold was helping in the dismantling of 《Aragorn》. Camus as well, with permission from Hiiro, tagged along to help him.

Hiiro however was called by Leowald to come to the 《Throne Room》 to which he obediently followed as he had business with Leowald as well.

There was Queen Blantha's appearance at the said place. She expressed her gratitude for treating Raive. Leowald who was surprised to hear about this also bowed to Hiiro in gratitude.

It seems Raive was well trusted by these people.

However, because Hiiro was more curious about Leowald's business to him, he asked about it.

"Well about that, that guy will come soon..."

At the moment those words were spoken, someone came inside.

"Oh! Nice timing Yuhito!"

As what Kukulia said, a bespectacled white rabbit-man wearing a white lab coat entered, who was also Rarashik's brother.

Apparently, the topic might be related to him. Hiiro who kept silent while thinking about it was then greeted.

"Nyohohoho! So this is the famous Hero of the 『Evila』. Greetings my friend!"

Hiiro twitched the moment he was called. For some reason, this high-pitched guy resembled a certain perverted butler he knew of.

"You see I've been interested to your power for a long time, to restore Mimiru's voice that I have painstakingly tried to research about it day and night only to fail in every attempt..... I've been wanting to meet you! Nyohohoho!"

Ah, his intuition was right. This guy is metamorphosed version of that butler. Those eyes behind those glasses was shining the exact way that perverted butler recklessly shows.

"Yuhito, you are being rude to the guest."

"Ah, I apologize Blantha-sama, I'm sorry for my behavior!"

He swung his body towards Hiiro and smoothly bowed to him.

"Did you bring that thing, Yuhito?"

"Yes, here."

Yuhito pulled out something wrapped in red drapes from his right hand. He

approached Leowald and turned the cloth over exposing the contents inside.

An ordinary knife was seen on it. Leowald took it and showed it to Hiyo.

"You see, this is the thing I would like to ask your help of. Yuhito."

"Gladly. This knife may look ordinary from the outside, but this is in fact the same knife that deprived the life of 『The Tree of Beginning - Aragorn』"

Hiyo stared at the knife closely. Part of the handle wasn't decorated that much. There was only a small quartz-like bead fitted in the lower part of the handle.

"No matter how Yuhito examined it, he couldn't find the curse that took the life of 『Aragorn』"

Certainly, what he says was true. Looking at the knife closely, it doesn't seem to be cursed no matter what angle you see it.

If so, then there was something special in this simple knife.

"That said, we do know the materials used to make this knife."

"And these materials are?"

"Have you heard about the 『Tyrant of the Sea』, the Monarch Kraken?"

"Yeah, you're talking about the rank SSS monster that lives at the bottom of the 『Belial Sea』 right?"

Hiyo only knew of this because he had read it in one of the articles he had. Without it, he might have not known about this monster's existence.

"Correct. And one of the traits of it has on its body is the 『Daftgil』"

"First time I heard it."

"Well, that's understandable. Only those who have faced with it are the ones only knowledgeable about this. Anyway, it is said that this 『Daftgil』 was created through the solidification of its blood making it able to pass through magic with ease."

Well. innate magic was essentially from the blood system of one's body. So that would mean,

“Are you suggesting this knife is made of this 《Daftgil》 you speak of?”

“...exactly.”

“I see. For that knife to be made up of that, it is quite surprising.”

“I agree, however, this also means someone had subjugated that 《Tryant》 at the bottom of the sea.”

Certainly, that was quite an unexpected information. Under normal circumstances, one would flee in face of a Rank SSS monster.

Moreover. The battle area was under the sea. Movement is limited and so are the magic usable under it. It is without a doubt that someone stronger than that monster fought with it.

Avoros’ subordinates were definitely behind this.

“Well, there is also a possibility it was taunted towards the land.”

But Hiyo doesn’t want to bet on that. After all, these were the Predecessor Demon Lord’s subordinates after all. Like how Silva evaluated that 『Spirit』 among their ranks, all of them are close to being an anomaly class.

Leowald then released a heavy sigh,

“Anyway, whoever knocked down that Monarch Kraken isn’t our main priority right now. It’s the material used in that knife.”

“What about that crystal gem?”

“Nyohohoho! We actually don’t know!”

“You...don’t know?”

“I can say for sure that it’s a magic bead, however I couldn’t clarify it more than that.”

Yuhito spoke with an apologetic tone.

“This is why I have called you here today.”

“... betting that I may find something else, huh?”

“Gahaha! You read my mind!”

Is it really alright to laugh at a time like this Beast King?

"...well, I may not anything more than you guys know, but I may find something once I examine it carefully."

"Oh! As expected of the man I admitted! Look Blantha! I told you right? Hiiro will do something about this!"

"It seems so. However dear, he hasn't properly made his response yet to your request."

It's as Blantha has said. Certainly among the characters using his 『Word Magic』, 『Clarify | 解明』, 『Expose | 解説』 or any characters related to investigation could examine the mysterious knife.

At the expense, however, that it is not for free. As for Hiiro, though he is really curious about the knife, he thought about using this opportunity for that matter.

"Hey Beast King, in exchange for examining the knife, I have a favor to ask. Deal?"

Chapter 241 - Ideal Land

“...sorry Hiiro, could you repeat it again?”

Although Leowald heard what Hiiro wanted in exchange for appraising the knife, it seems to have rendered him speechless as if it was beyond his expectations and decided to ask again if he was not mistaken for what he had heard.

“Like I said, give me a part of this continent.”

“....it seems I didn’t hear it by mistake, isn’t this talk a little too much for this, Hiiro?”

“Then I’ll use the two loans you had from me, and use that in exchange for this.”

The first one came from the wager they bet at the time before they started the duel. If Hiiro won, he vowed to do one thing for him. And the other one came from healing Leowald after being mortally wounded from their duel.

“...if you consider also Mimiru’s matter, certainly I may have a lot of debts to you, but...”

“Don’t get me wrong Beast King. That is Blue Ribbon’s own personal debt to me. You don’t need to include her matters aside.”

Indeed, that matter was undertook personally by Mimiru herself. Thus, Beast King has only two loans from Hiiro.

“E-even so.... To ask for a piece of land from this continent is...”

“And here I thought you were a magnanimous king, hm?”

“Even under such a request, I don’t have a good grasp about the entirety of this continent, a lot of people are scattered living in this land. I may be the one called the King of among our kins, but I do not hope to brandish my power to threaten the lives of my people. More so, taking away their homeland.”

What a splendid statement from a king. Hiiro wanted King Rudolph to learn a thing or two from him. However, Hiiro had also taken this into mind.

"No need to worry about that. The land what I had in mind is actually a deserted land."

"A deserted land...? D-don't tell me the one where the duel was held, 【Valaru Desert】?"

"Ah, that place would be appropriate to my request."

"Certainly, that place doesn't have anyone there. Rather, are you fine with such wilderness? There is really nothing in there you know?"

Hiiro knew about that. He had confirmed that there were no vegetation present or any living beings in that place.

"Do I need to repeat it again? That place meets the requirement of my request."

Leowald narrowed his eyes, he was trying to read Hiiro's intentions about this. However, he couldn't in face of Hiiro's expressionless visage.

"...what in the world are you planning to do with it?"

"I don't want to answer it in a roundabout way, so I'll go straight to the point."

Not only Leowald, Blantha and Yuhito held their breath.

"I will make a 【Paradise】 in that place"

"P-paradise...you say?"

"Yeah"

Hiiro answered Leowald who had an expression as if he wasn't prepared for that.

"W-wait a minute. Why did you choose in our continent? Rather, why did you want to make such a thing? A-and also, what is this 【Paradise】 you speak of?"

In response to Leowald's successive inquiries,

"Dear, if you ask your questions to Hiiro-san all at once, he can't answer you properly."

At Blantha's considerate urge, Leowald retracted his words and made a

sigh. He took a deep breath in order to regain his composure.

"I have a lot of questions about this Hiiro, but you will answer them all, right?"

"Yeah."

"Umu, then first, what is this 【Paradise】 you speak of?"

"To put it simply, it's a place where everyone can enjoy. A place where you can live a comfortable life."

"Everyone? What do you mean by this?"

"Before I answer that, there is a question I've been meaning to ask you."

"....what?"

"What is your opinion about Halves?"

At the mention of Hiiro's question, Leowald eyebrows moved, making an expression as if he knew where this was going.

"....So that's what you mean, this 【Paradise】 serves as a place for the halves to live peacefully and safely, correct?"

"A little bit close, but not exactly."

"Ha?"

"Not only the halves. It's also a place for those people who have been rejected by the world and lost their way in life."

"...so criminals in short?"

"Hey Beast King, don't put such dangerous fellows in that place. Although if they are looking to be reformed, they may be allowed to live in that place or so I heard."

"Hm? You heard? Hiiro, this is not your idea?"

After that, Hiiro taught the founder of that place, Liliyn. According to her, it was her dream of building 【A place where everyone can enjoy】, so she set out to travel and gradually found comrades who are of the same mind with her dream. But she couldn't find the suitable land to start her dream.

Hiiro who wanted that dream to come true intended to do something about it. So when he arrived at the place of the duel, he informed Liliyn and gave her approval on it.

According to her, it was an ideal place considering the size of the land and the environment. However, this was the Gabranth's continent.

Liliyn couldn't establish the 【Paradise】 because she was an 『Evila』. Then, Hiiro recalled about the debts Leowald owed to Hiiro, and decided to use that as a means to transfer the rights of that land.

“Fumu, for 《Red Rose》 to plan of such things...I’m impressed”

“Regarding the location, though the Gabranth continent is quite vast, in terms of distance between here and there, it would be very suitable without affecting anyone’s daily lives.”

“...why did you choose our continent?”

“Well, to be honest, that’s the answer we arrived after eliminating the other alternatives.”

“Alternatives?”

“First of all the Humas continent is narrow. We may find it difficult to find a big land over there because there are a lot of villages scattered everywhere. Furthermore, I don’t think any human beings would accept this proposal over there. At least in their current situation.”

Especially the close aides of King Rudolph who truly hated the heretics. It would endanger the people they were going to shelter, not to mention the halves, thus there was no room for negotiation.

“If you say it like that, then the Evila continent is far wider in comparison. And surely there would be no scattered villages that will hamper in establishing the place over there. You can also establish 【Paradise】 over there too, am I wrong?”

“In terms of the land, yes. Environment however, no.”

“Environment?”

“As you may know, the environment in Evila is quite tough to live in.

Sometimes it's mid-winter, and then the next day a fierce heat follows. It's similar to how the extreme weather in the mountains change. And then there's also the monsters. It is considerably difficult to find a suitable place with Rank A or higher monsters roaming around. "

It seemed Liliyn tried to search one in the past, but in the end failed to do so.

"And in comparison with 【Valaru Desert】, there are no monsters living in that place, and the land is very large. The problem however is how to pioneer it so that people can live there, but we can do something about that. It was originally a place inhabited by people after all."

"I very well understand your point, however, you do know that the ones who made that crater are the Evila's right?"

Hiiro heard that the crater was made by the hands of the Predecessor Demon Lord Avoros.

"And to add more to that, 《Red Rose》 is an 『Evila』, a lot of problems would likely arose if she was allowed to make such a place."

"It is for that reason, that's why we want it there."

"...what do you mean?"

"In the past, it was certainly destroyed by the 『Evila』. That's why in order to change the common sense of this present world, we plan to make that land prosper through the 『Evila』. And through that, we could mend the relationship between the beast humans little by little. Or so she said."

"....."

"We know that the beast humans won't change their minds so easily about this matter. But think of this place as a bridge between two different races struggling mutually to be hand in hand with each other. Of course, there is a difference in the sense of values between races. But that difference isn't something we should hide, it is something we should improve."

Liliyn had once said to him before. That each of the race has their own personality and something they excel at. So if such excellent races showed off with each other mutually improving one another. Wouldn't that produce a

better one of themselves?

“So that’s why you are adamant it should be that place, huh? Fumu.”

Leowald was brooding about it while holding his chins. His glance then turned to Yuhito.

“Yuhito, what is your opinion about that matter?”

“Nyohohoho! It’s an empty dream.”

“I agree.”

“However...”

“Mu?”

“It seems to be an interesting idea. Nyohohoho!”

“....Blantha.”

He then looked at Blantha’s side to get an opinion from her, but her eyes were already shining with glee.

“Certainly, this matter has a lot of problems in hand. But, I want to see this **【Paradise】**too”

“Umu, I see.”

“**【A place where everyone can enjoy】**, was it? If such place really do exists, it would be a place that saves lives. Anyone’s lives! Moreover, the gourmet competition, the magic competition, and the hidden talent portion competition I heard awhile ago all looks so fascinating and fun!”

Leowald’s opposite was beaming with a bright smile as she clapped her hands together like a child.

“There are more of that you know. Like the sports contest and the amusement center that is in their planning stage.”

“Wow~, both of them sounds like wonderful events!”

Blantha’s face was the spitting image of Mimiru and Kukulia’s smile. They really were mother and daughters alike.

“Although Blantha may have said this awhile ago, it’s not an easy matter to

settle right now. Especially, when the current situation is rather difficult. We have finally tied with the 『Evila』, but we are on a deadlock with the 『Humas』. Moreover, we also have deal with the attacks of 《Matar Deus》 to this country.”

A shadow has cast down on Blantha's expression, the moment those words were said.

“Don't get me wrong Beast King. I only said my opinion to the last. Whether it becomes reality or not, you have to speak it with Red Loli. I'm just a supporter until the end. Of course, if you give me the rights to land right now, a lot of time will be saved and this problem can be solved quickly. However, even I don't have time to deal with the land right now. I can't leave the matter with that Template Maou as it is.”

Hiro's expression turned irritable as he recalled the memories regarding Avoros.

“Anyway, just keep this matter in mind positively. Let's use that in exchange for appraising the knife.”

“...sorry about that. Even though I believe you.”

“Don't worry about it. The current judgement you made is correct as a standpoint of a King. Also please hear the details more from Red Loli who I said awhile ago.”

“Sure. Even I'm a bit interested in this 『Paradise』 you speak of. If there really is a place where everyone can be happy, it's definitely a good place to have.”

Apparently, informing them about this was the right choice. It wasn't a matter they could settle from the start after all. Hiro was impressed for Leowald not easily deciding about it.

As a King, and as a Gabranth, he thought of his people first of all, however there was also a harvest, it turned out he also thought of the other races too in such a manner.

(Well, I suppose it's alright to progress this step by step.)

Chapter 242 - Real Food! Raive's Homemade Dish!

Hiiro was in the garden right now. Around him were the figures of Muir, Mimiru and Kukulia.

He was looking forward to Raive's dinner preparation as the day grew dark. And then, all so suddenly, he was invited by Mimiru to come at the garden.

"Since Hiiro-sama came with the trouble to come here, everyone let us have a meal together with Hiiro-sama!"

And that's how he ended up in here. Not that he was complaining. As long as he gets to eat a satisfying meal, location-wise wasn't a problem to him.

The dismantling work of the 『Tree of Beginning』 was temporarily halted too, and was scheduled to continue tomorrow in the morning.

Because of that, Arnold and Bard who had finished wrapping up their work came to the garden as well. And also,

"Hiirooooooooooooo!"

"I told you not to hug me Cat girl!"

Crouch who had been sleeping at the pavement of the training quarters woke up a few minutes ago, rushed towards the garden the moment she smelled Hiiro's scent.

"C-crouch-san! That's being rude to our guest! You are troubling Hiiro-sama!"

Although Mimiru was desperately warning Crouch about it,

"No way meow! I missed hugging him because I slept through the day meow! So let me be! I'm charging meow!"

"I cannot accept that reason, now let go!"

However, Crouch firmly clung to him and shook her head in refusal to Mimiru..... Can't be helped then.

“....ah! What is that over there?”

“Nyahaha! I may have been fooled by that before, but that won’t work with the me right now meow!”

Tsk... why do you have to be so smart. Well, it would be a problem though if one of the 《Gabranth Three》 was fooled by the same hand so many times.

(I give up. Either way that guy is going to get tired of sooner anyway...)

Her atmosphere was very similar to Mikazuki. Sooner or later she would find something interesting and run off towards it.

“Uuu... I’m jealous...”

“E-even I want to do it too..”

Muir and Mimiru gazed at Crouch with envious eyes, but someone small came behind Crouch.

And that someone grabbed Crouch’s collar.

“Eh? Ah? W-who’s there meow!?”

Crouch was puzzled by the one who pulled her away from Hiyo. When she turned her sights behind her,

“Meow!? Putis!?”

In her presence was a lovely bear, also known as one of the 《Gabranth Three》

“Kuro... you still have work to do.”

“You’re lying!”

“I am not. This is for the portion you’ve slept the entire day.”

“Meow! Hirooooooooooooooo!”

(TL Note: Putis is apparently calling Crouch by his former appearance, the black adult one which derives the name Kuro, which also means Black.)

What a miserable sight..... She was forcibly dragged by Putis as they exited the garden. However, before Putis went out, Muir and Mimiru gave her a thumbs-up sign both at the same time.

Then, unexpectedly, one attendant came with a big table, and what followed

after were people carrying large platter of foods. The fragrance of the garden was filled with appetizing smells of the dishes being carried towards them.

Although this was the compensation for treating Raive's wound, just giving the dishes served a single glance was enough for Hiiro to almost lose his sense of restraint.

"Mm... seems delicious."

Camus seemed to have been captivated by the dishes laid out as he drooled over them. Tenn as well was going "Uhiii!" while joyfully jumping on Hiiro's shoulder. Maybe it's best if he push this monkey away?

Apparently, Arnold also seems to have helped a little with dishes as he started boasting about it.

(Speaking of the old man, I guess it has been long time since the last time I tasted his cooking)

Back when he was traveling with Arnold, despite his constant proclamation of being "a self-proclaimed chef", his dishes were really truly satisfying indeed.

"Hoh, now this is a magnificent feast."

"Fufu, indeed."

Late on their arrival, next that entered was Leowald and Blantha together. Then, behind them was someone familiar. He had seen this person before. After them, another one came but made a rather rude entry.

"Oi Red Rode! I challenge you to a duel!"

Hiiro was dumbfounded as to why would this person say that with this festivity right now.

"Hey Lenion, that's very impolite to our guest!"

Ah, he remembered now. The one who was scowling at Hiiro was the Second Prince Lenion, and the one who rebuked was the First Prince Leglos.

"Exactly, stop saying such rude words Brother Leni."

Kukulia made a remark mixed with an angry tone of voice. However, even though Lenon was reprimanded by the two, he didn't stop glaring at Hiiro.

“I don’t care! Fight m-!?”

Before he could finish it, his head was grabbed from behind, when he turned around,

“There is a place for a fighting. And there is a place for not, Lenion.”

“B...ut, Father.”

As expected of Leowald.

“No buts young man, right now is the time to enjoy the feast.”

At her mother’s urge, Lenion clicked his tongue and awkwardly left the place.

“Seriously... I apologize for Lenion’s behalf Hiiro-dono”

Leglos spoke with such attitude to him. Hiiro understood why Lenon’s attitude was like that, he was the winner of the duel after all, the ringleader who crushed their pride. And surely, Leglos must have felt the same way too.

But despite all of that, he was able to lower his head in apology, far opposite from Lenion’s rude behaviour.

(Well, he isn’t the First Prince for nothing...)

To be honest, Hiiro doesn’t hate the comprehensible type like Lenion awhile ago. It’s because those type are easy to manipulate. For Hiiro, a person who acts by their emotions were far more easier to deal with.

Leglos then ran after Lenion after his apologetic remark. What a responsible big brother. Goodluck backing up your little brother.

“Sorry about that Hiiro”

“No worries. But if you plan to raise someone like that as the next king, good luck.”

“Gahaha! It hurts when you say it like that!”

“That’s not a laughing matter dear. I deeply apologize for my son’s behaviour Hiiro-san. I’ll properly make sure he learns from this.”

Blantha also asks for forgiveness as well but it was really unnecessary,

anymore from her would make Hiiro the one who needed to apologize to them.

At that moment, someone made a beating sound with their hands to gain everyone's attention. Raive's voice came after that.

"Alright! Everyone may I have your attention!"

The housemaids behind her held one large platter tightly sealed with a metal lid. It was then carefully placed on the main table.

"This my guests is Raive's Special!"

At the declaration of her words, Raive lifted the lid. And what was shown there was,

"『Four-Coloured-Manjuu』!"

Red, Blue, Green, and White meat buns were piled up. Each were classified from their distinctive colours. At the removal of the lid, a strong smell stimulated Hiiro's senses.

He could not stop the urge from drooling over it. He wanted to taste it so badly.

"Now, please dig in!"

Every dishes laid out were all so delicious, but what Hiiro was very anxious about was, as expected, the meat buns. Camus and Tenn also felt the same as they quietly stared at it.

However, he was hesitating which to start with. Most probably each of the coloured buns were respectively different in flavor. Moreover, there was no explanation regarding this, all of beastmen were broadly grinning at him, awaiting for him to taste it.

Perhaps they have tasted this beforehand as they have adamantly suggested him to enjoy it to the fullest.

"What are you guys going to eat first?"

"For me.....Blue"

"Uhi! I'm going for Green!"

"Nitouryuu is Blue. Yellow Monkey is Green. Then I will choose...Red."

Each of them grabbed their desired buns, and quietly bit on it.

“Hot!?”

At that moment, the gravy inside the bun overflowed inside his mouth. And this hot gravy stimulated his delight as he tasted its flavor within. The hotness was troubling, but the rich sensation of the gravy’s flavor was quite satisfactory.

Moreover, it has a tingling effect on his tongue, probably the cause was red pepper. To add more to that, the hard but juicy texture of what it seems to be a meatball inside the bun complements the gravy and spice all together. It was a scrumptious dish.

Although he may not know what kind of meat it was, he could however say that it was really savory. It had the thick flavour worthy as a special dish. And when combined with the gravy, and the stock, it balances out the taste making it a very sensational dish. To the point of making him want more.

When he looked at Camus, it was very obvious based from his delighted eyes. Although his expression was still expressionless.

“Hiiro...this is good.”

“This one is delicious too~!”

Apparently, Tenn side seems to have been satisfied as well.

As if Raive anticipated their reactions, she finally began to explain the dish.

“The meat on the red bun is not actually meat. It’s 《Deep Red Tofu》 made from 《Deep Red Soybeans》 !”

Tofu!?

But texture-wise, it wasn’t, not just that, but the flavor as well was a perfect depiction of a meat. However, according to Raive, by steaming these 《Deep Red Tofu》 and then deep frying it, the process would then able to make the tofu’s texture similar to that of a meat as well approaching a similar flavor too. And by wrapping the whole thing in a red wrapper while being steamed again, the red bun would then be completed.

(And because of that《Deep Red Tofu》, it brought out the real deal)

The gravy was confined as it was deep fried in the process, so the moment he bit on it, the savory goodness just willingly gushed forth making it a worthwhile experience.

“The next one is for the blue bun, the meat inside it came from the 《Blue Pig》”

It was said that the texture of the meat that came from a 《Blue Pig》 was as soft like a cloud. The meat is crushed, then minced and mixed with the dressing of the bun, giving it a shade of blue. This dressing is then used to wrap up rectangular cubes of the same meat.

It's flavour was similar to red bean jam, a rich bittersweet flavor, recommended for those who prefer challenging flavors.

“The one used for the green bun is a 《Green King Tomato》”

It was said that 《Green King Tomato》 was initially a yellow tomato at first. Once it turned emerald green, it is ready for harvest and apparently, at this stage, it is a very helpful antioxidant. However, growth period of this vegetable is very slow, difficult for amateur farmers to cultivate it with ease.

That said, the taste however is really special. It has the sweetness and acidity of what a tomato is. And apparently a famous nutritional vegetable for women.

The tomato is kneaded and mixed inside the contents, cramming it inside with other healthy vegetables. The vegetables chosen were at least 10 or more.

And steaming it all together would make this rare beauty worthy to be a part of special dish.

“And lastly is the white bun, and the main ingredient used for this one is the phantom fruit also known as the 《Silver Peach》!”

That fruit was familiar. 《Silver Peach》..... it was known to be fruit that can only be harvested at the top of the mountain at it's winter peak.

This fruit was sold at an unbelievably high price depending on the pureness of its silvery white color. It's size however is relatively similar to a normal peach.

Hiro unintentionally grabbed a white bun and bit on it. Just from biting it, he could taste and smell the sweetness of the peach. And he could also taste bean

jam in it, a best complement for this sweetened fruit.

(What's more the smell of the peach stimulates my appetite. This one...is delicious!)

The dressing is probably mixed with the skin of the fruit. It really lives up to being a phantom fruit, a hard to get ingredient but a definitely must ingredient to have. The bean jam inside it was also a pleasurable ride to enjoy along with the original flavor of the fruit. This fruit is definitely the fruit among the top of them all.

"Hahaha, it was delicious, isn't it Hiiro?"

At Arnold's boasting, Hiiro couldn't doubt about this cooking anymore. 《Four-Coloured-Manjuu》 was definitely a dish worthy to be called special.

However, the complements doesn't end there, there were other appealing dishes that he hadn't tried out yet. Lot's of it. His cheeks loosened to the sheer amount of pleasure laid out in front of him.

After that, while everyone was eating their meals,

"U-um..."

A voice called out to him from behind, and saw Mimiru fidgeting while carrying a shy expression.

"...what?"

"Y-you see..."

"Goodluck Mimiru-chan!"

At Muir's bright encouragement to Mimiru, the latter answered with a simple 'Yes' and nodded in response. She returned her gaze to Hiiro and squeezed out her courage.

"H-Hiiro-sama! I would like you to listen my song!"

Chapter 243 - Mimiru's Song

“....your song?”

“Yes, my song!”

Hiiro then remembered something at that moment. Now that she mentioned it, he heard that Mimiru was very talented in singing.

She who was the leading songstress of this country fell into despair as she became unable to sing, much less speak due to a foreign illness. However, she made a comeback when Hiiro treated her.

“So you are going to sing right here?”

“D-does it displeases you?”

She responded with a rather uneasy expression as her eyes became a little teary.

“No, you said that you want me to hear you sing. Just asking if this place was the appropriate one to do it. Not that I mind listening to your song in here.”

“Ehehe, Hiiro-san! Mimiru-chan’s song is really good!”

“Gahaha! It’s as Muir says! My daughter’s talent as a singer will surely fit your taste!”

Although this foolish parent said so, it appears that it wasn’t entirely false as most of beastmen soldiers sternly watched Mimiru take the center stage.

Mimiru stands up from the stage and looked at her audience.

“This song is dedicated to Hiiro-sama who had allowed me to sing once again to my fellow beastmen.”

“....to me?”

After such speech, Mimiru had her cheeks flushed while carrying a lovely smile on her face. She was a bit nervous with a pair of trembling hands on her chest silently praying for success.

“Well then, please listen to this song entitled 《May this feeling reach you》”

At that moment, the atmosphere of Mimiru that everyone was quietly watching changed. Her tension was lost from her expression replaced with a more mature one as she slowly closed her eyes.

Her lips then quietly began to sing.

The day was wrapped in a very pleasant weather

Just like the dazzling You who had unwavering eyes, only looking straight ahead

You who healed my heart and helped me regain the important things I cherish
I desperately tried to run after You who was far ahead.

Knowing that someday I would be walking side by side with You

So I always pray and think of You

Wishing You safety and happiness in your travels

And hope this feeling may reach You

A clear and beautiful voice singing a gentle melody resonated in the place. Hiro couldn't help close his eyes and listened to the sound overflowing around. If only he could listen to it forever.

And not only did it carry such pleasantries. It also was brimming with heartfelt emotions. He was overwhelmed the next moment when the woman on the center stage opened her eyes.

Small innumerable particles of light manifested around her surroundings then. It shined and sparkled as if accentuating Mimiru's inspiring song just like a perfect depiction of a shining star.

Anyone who witnessed it were instantly enamored by such a sight. It was when he wondered what those lights were that,

"I'm surprised. That little miss over there was able to induce the 『Spirits』 like this"

Tenn murmured in a whisper. In other words, those small ball of lights were actually 『Spirits』. Not a high rank existence like Tenn however, but a shapeless and powerless existence born naturally through this world.

However, it seems Tenn was more surprised for an ordinary beast human, moreover, a little girl capable of influencing the 『Spirits』 through her melodic voice and cause such a phenomenon.

Only those who were liked by the 『Spirits』 or the 『Spirits』 themselves were the only one possible of capably doing this.

(So that's what she meant about being able to see things not visible to the naked eyes)

Hiiro recalled her words when he met her the first time. At that time, Hiiro was strolling inside the 《King's Tree》 with the 『Transparency | 透明』 in effect.

Of course, the beast men passing by did not feel Hiiro's presence. It was only Mimiru who was able to notice his existence back then.

According to her, she could see ghosts and 『Spirits』 for a long time, probably a direct manifestation of Mimiru's mysterious power.

When he looked at the surroundings, the people were glued to Mimiru's figure on the center, watching and staring at her. They weren't distracted by anyone as they continued to be fascinated by Mimiru's song.

And finally, Mimiru quietly closed her mouth. At that point, a surge of applause and cheers were given to her. And particles of light gradually disappeared to the sky as if they were satisfied with this.

Mimiru also had a bright smile on her face as she slowly descended from the stage and went towards Hiiro's seat.

Hiiro did not know if it was due to the tension or her embarrassment, but she's flushed red from head to toe and can't seem to look at him straight to the eyes.

“W-was the...song...to your liking, Hiiro-sama?”

She fidgeted once again, an atmosphere that certainly stirred one's heart to protect such a delicate beauty.

Hiiro responded with a honest reply to her.

“Yeah, it was really good that you caught me off guard.”

"Is that true! Are you really really sure!"

Hiro gently flicked her forehead causing her out of her trance.

"Auu"

"As expected of a diva. You were definitely great out there."

As if her brain overheated, her face flushed instantly and,

"T-t-t-t-thank you for your kind compliment!"

Leaving with only those words, she went towards Muir's place with her hands covering her flushed cheeks. Muir seems to have calmed her down by patting her head.... but

(Wasn't that reaction way too exaggerated?)

For a songstress to react that way from a simple compliment was quite worrying.. But he soon abandoned such thoughts when he saw her calm down.

"Achaa~ this blockhead still didn't get it from that~"

Although Tenn's murmur reached Hiro's ears,

"Whatever, I just honestly told her my honest opinion, and did you say something Yellow Monkey?"

He wondered what did the Yellow Monkey said. He wasn't able to hear it.

"Umu! As expected of my daughter! A world-class leading singer! Gahaha!"

What world are you speaking of? Hiro wanted to retort Leowald's word with that, but then Kukulia came towards him.

"How was my little sister's beautiful voice?"

"Hm? Just like what your father said a while ago. She could be a world-class singer in my world."

With that charming looks and enchanting voice she possessed, she would surely end up becoming a popular artist.

"I see, so you mean to say she would become popular in your own world?"

"Yeah."

Hiro easily affirmed it because there was no need to conceal such personal things.

"I see. So even in your world she could be popular, huh? Mimiru is really amazing."

".....what's with that imouto's talent-complex you're expressing?"

"A-as if I'm making that kind of face!"

Even if you turn your head away, it's not very persuasive you know? But Mimiru's song was certainly not ordinary. A trace of innate talent was shown off as well.

It may be natural to feel jealous to such a talent that can garner everyone's attention. Moreover, the little sister that was capable of doing it.... but

He noticed a shadow cast upon her expression, anxious and lost, he decided to say something on a whim.

"You speak of popularity, but aren't you popular as well among your people?"

"....eh?"

What are you trying to say? , she had such a face that shows that, but Hiro ignored it and continued on.

"Just like that Bird Man, you know the names and faces of every citizen."

"T-that's merely because I have a strong memory."

"Moreover, I heard you were walking around the streets almost everyday listening to the citizen's voices."

"....."

"No one ordinary can do such a thing. You are exactly the ideal person fit for royalty. Even though you envy your little sister's talent, when you as well possess such an outstanding talent. Really now.."

Kukulia went silent for a while, then there was faint blush on her cheek as she smiled at him.

"I think I understand now why Mimiru and Muir thinks about you a lot."

“Huh?”

Although Hiiro meddled a little, he was grateful it worked favorably as Kukulia’s previous mood was now entirely pleasant. With this much festivity going on, a gloomy mood was unfit in such a place.

“What a natural smooth talker...”

“Did you just say something?”

When he asked back Tenn about his murmur, Tenn could only give him a sigh of amazement.

(What the heck was that for...?)

The dinner party under the starry sky finally closed with Mimiru’s song, and those who had work still left the place as it is.

Apparently, among the citizens, there seemed to be some people listening to Mimiru’s song under the 《King’s Tree》 and also comfortably left home after.

Despite the tragic collapse of 《The Tree of Beginning》 , everyone’s mood seemed to have become little joyful than before. Hiiro could somewhat feel it based from their attitudes right now.

Chapter 244 - A Visit at Midnight

Around the time Hiiro finished the dinner party, a little after that, one man was meditating cross-legged in a sitting posture at the terrace of 【Victorias】 Royal castle.

And that man was Judom Lancaster. The substitute King of 【Victorias】

He gathered trustworthy people among the citizens and settled the people confused by the rumours spreading around..

Back then the country was in full chaos, even the aristocrats and soldiers were in an outrage and the country was almost at the brink of its collapse, but steadily, the current situation is being mended little by little.

These were the result of Judom and his trusted followers deeds. However, he couldn't remove all the anxieties of the people.

Bad things overlapped with one another, such as their trusted King going mad and missing, as well as the disappearance of the summoned heroes, their proclaimed saviors. The anxieties piled up and remained upon the shadow of the people's mind.

Whether another race would attack them, Judom didn't know. In fact, there was an ongoing rumour that the 『Gabranth』 and 『Evila』 had united as allies.

Some of the royalties under Judom believed that such rumour was definitely true. But it is because of this rumour that further stirred up the anxiety of the people.

Judom did not believe that Eveam would strike 【Victorias】 for revenge. And as for the Beast King, he is basically a man who fights fair and square, so he won't necessarily make a move unless you first hit him.

Of course, he couldn't let his guard down. He couldn't sincerely call this a safe haven yet. But just for a bit, his intuition was telling him that those two race won't attack their country for a long while.

In terms of politics however, it only gives birth to unnecessary revolt for the

aristocrats. Some even suggested outrageous things such as raiding them while they had the chance.

Attack before they were attacked. This principle was no different from Rudolph who had fallen and gone mad. What they should do now was strike the turmoil of this country, and establish a country that would not shake from such anxieties.

When he said this to the nobles, only a few were convinced. Well, they might be actually scared. Scared for the fact, that the 『Gabranth』 and 『Evila』 would fight back for the inhuman things they had done to their kind.

That's why they are afraid of retaliation. That's why they suggested to kill them first before they get killed.

(What a miserable sight really...)

Judom closed his eyes, ashamed that he himself did not know how rotten this country was. And to think he was following orders from them.....no, he was more frightened by the stupidity of his close friend King Rudolph.

In the past, he was a gentle boy who couldn't even kill an insect. And he didn't change at all once he became the king, that's why the people believed and supported him as the king.

Then when did the change occur?

Judom drew up Rudolph's past in his head like a memory map. And then he found something..... it was the time when came back after participating in a war.

He could still remember Rudolph returning with an appearance bathed in fresh blood. His expression that time were of despair and frustration. A first for Judom to witness.

(As I thought, he's probably still thinking about you...)

Judom and Rudolph had another best friend. That friend was the wisest among the three and they knew each other from an early age. A very strong woman.

Her name was Alice. She was an energetic and sociable woman who had a

strong sense of justice, and a smile that had the same glee as that of a sunflower. As they grew up, she joined the army due to her profound sense of justice.

When Rudolph became the king, she climbed her way up to the top of the army as one of first female commander in history. And it wasn't due to her connection that she was granted such responsibility, it was purely due to her ability alone.

She who had enough power to blow away an average adventurer with a single blow passionately protected the country, Rudolph and the citizens.

However, Alice never came back after Rudolph returned with a blood-stained appearance. She had died from the war. According to Rudolph, Alice saved a child being kept as a hostage by the enemy, alone. Although she managed to do it, however in exchange, she was held captive by the enemy, and at that time, Rudolph witnessed it..... An appearance impossible to be defined by mere words.

(If I based it from that time... he started to develop a fierce hatred towards the enemy)

Judom understood the cause of that change back then. Because Rudolph loved Alice. Although their social standpoints were way different, Rudolph thought of her from the bottom of his heart.

Even though his fiance was already prearranged, he would utmost fulfil his duty as the king if she was living happily with her life.

However, Rudolph changed after he witnessed Alice being deprived of her life...no, it wasn't an exaggeration to say that his mind broke from that experience.

Although it wasn't visible on the surface, but Judom was sure that his heart had remained frozen since that time. Even if he was married to a beautiful wife, had kids, and his country prospered, Rudolph might have never felt true happiness.

(But still, Rudolph, you are the king of this country)

It was obvious that Alice was the cause of Rudolph's change. But did he had to

go far like this? It made him want to scold and beat the crap out of that foolish man.

It was also the same back then when Rudolph makes a mistake and cries over it like a little girl. Alice would always scold him harshly and then comforts him with a gentle smile while saying 'let's think this through together!'

However, that woman was not present anymore in this world. Then, who would take that role? The answer was obvious.

(I will beat the sense out of that guy and drag along with me! It's my right as his best friend!)

He was sure Alice would say the same thing to Rudolph.

While Judom was resting at the terrace under the full moon of the night sky, his instincts triggered as if an electricity ran through his back.

His eyes sharpened, and only moved his mouth while still staring at the night sky.

".....who are you?"

Silence had enveloped the place. It was midnight everyone should have been sleeping, and yet, he could feel some presence behind him.

Soon after, laughter echoed, the voice was shaky as that of a child. Judom quietly stood up and turned around.

Judom was wide eyed as the anonymous's appearance of his guest was revealed. Why is there a child at this time of the night?

While Judom was in doubt, the boy who had a beautiful blond hair calmly set up his sights on Judom, eyes that were peering through him.

"Even though I erased my presence before coming here, as expected of the 《Impact King》"

The amused expression with a funny smile was that of an innocent child. However, he could feel something irregular about it.

It's as if the contents of the inside is way different than what was on the surface.

“...I’ll ask again, who are you?”

This cannot be just an ordinary child. No one would come this late at night, moreover a young boy, to meet the substitute king. His senses were telling him to be wary of the child. The mysterious aura on him was dangerous!

“Now that you mention it. You haven’t met me in this form yet, right?”

At the moment, the boy’s thirst of blood gushed forth from his body, and at the same time, his eyes narrowed as if a snake found its prey.

“This pressure...don’t tell me, you?”

It was an unbelievable notion, that pressure, that ferociousness, he will never forget that person. The person that planted fear on them in the past.

“....the Demon Lord?”

“Ahaha, that’s right. You now get it?”

Judom clenched his fist, and expanded his sense on the surrounding. It’s impossible for this Demon Lord, no, Predecessor Demon Lord to come here alone.

(Then assassination...? Was there such person in our ranks?)

He considered the thought of them to overtake the country by killing him. Then, he noticed someone behind the Predecessor Demon Lord.

Moreover, their signs increased fast. Feeling the sense incongruity, the boy gazed behind.

“Ah, let me introduce them. These here are my subordinates.”

All of them wore black clothing. Each of them carried an incomparable atmosphere, before he knew it he was drenched in sweat, overwhelmed by the numerous presence before him.

“...is the rumours about you true?”

“Hm?”

“The information about the 『Evila』 and 『Gabranth』’s duel have reached in here. And at 『Evila』’s victory, they formed an alliance. And in the midst of that, you people have announced your proclamation of war to them.”

"The rumours sure travels fast. Well. you wouldn't be hailed as the King if you can't at least do this much. Well done!"

Judom was being held in derision as the child clapped happily.

"...what is your purpose in here?"

"...let's just say, today is going to be a fine day today."

A person near Avoros suddenly threw something towards Judom. As it rolled closer, he was stunned by the identity of it.

It was the severed head of Lord Jance, one of the royal aristocrats of this country.

"You bastard!?"

"Ahaha! Yes, be angry. I only removed the stains of this nation. It's quite depressing right? But, I guess you were not aware of it, huh? These trashes were planning a coup d'etat to you."

"...."

"Well, let's leave it at that, although it's kind of fun to add more confusion to the fray but, I did that ahead of time so that I can take advantage of this situation."

"...what are you talking about?"

Take advantage of this confusion? Those words rang a pang in his heart.

Then, the corners of Avoros' mouth warped just like a crescent moon.

"Judom Lancaster.... As the King of 《Matar Deus》, I hereby by announce this to you."

"...."

"I will take this country for myself."

Read this after finishing the chapter.

In this chapter, there was a new character introduced.

Now I want to clear up any misunderstanding regarding this.

Back in chapter 213. There was a character revealed to be Marquis Bluenote

who was also called by the name Alicia (Arisha | アリシャ)

In here, a new character was introduced as Alice (Arisu | アリス)

I'm going to be blunt here. It's just a coincidence. Those two are not the same character. If I have a say on this, Alicia has a bigger role in this novel.

And as a side note, Alicia's daughter is not Liliyn, Camus nor Muir. (*smirk*)

With that said, thank you for your time reading this.

Chapter 245 - Takeover

"The country for yourself? Have you gone senile?"

Judom glared at Avoros who said those insane intentions which the latter only responded with a laugh.

"To tell you the truth, we actually plan to take advantage of this situation through the coup d'etat of that trash awhile ago..."

At the mention of the trash he speaks of, Judom glanced at the thrown severed head of Lord Jance, the first one on the list of the anti-Judom faction.

"But if the coup d'etat really did happen, I will lose a lot of pieces to use."

"Huh?"

"Ahaha, I'm talking about the remaining soldiers of this country, silly. I would be troubled if they died for a pointless reason."

At the mention of those words, Judom finally recalled another name of this person.

《Necromancer》... The power to call the dead and freely employ at his control. And another thought suddenly came to him.

(....In order to use the dead, isn't it necessary that the bodies should be dead?)

As Judom imagined it, wouldn't it be more convenient if he could garner more dead bodies through the coup d'etat.

However, the way he said it sounded like he would be troubled if they died. What is the meaning of this...

(So he can't really raise the dead? Was it all just a rumour? Or was there a condition first before they die?)

Many doubts came into his mind, but he discarded it for now as it was not the time to be thinking of such things.

"What do you plan to do by taking ownership of this country?"

“How embarrassing 『Impact King』, isn’t it normal for us kings to have a country we should govern?”

“.....why this country?”

“Kukuku, you really don’t know the reason?”

Avoros attempted to test Judom out, of course he was aware of this. But he didn’t answer back and awaited for his answer in silence.

“It can’t be helped. I’ll indulge you for a bit. Normally, the best candidate would be the 【Demon Country】, even I had initially planned to take it.”

That’s natural because he was the Predecessor Demon Lord.

“But it’s a little bit difficult.”

“...?”

“Plainly speaking, raiding that place is a bit difficult to do so. A lot of powerful forces are gathered there, so I helplessly gave up on it.”

Certainly what he said was true. It is the homeland of the 『Evila』 race and with the current alliance they were establishing, it was virtually impossible to conquer 【Xaous】 easily.

“What about the 【Beast Kingdom】?”

At that question, Avoros just shrugged his shoulders and laughed scornfully.

“Ahaha, please stop joking with me. In face of that beastly stench, even I would give up on it.”

Apparently, the whole point is that he didn’t just like that place. And with that also out, it was reasonable that Avoros would select 【Victoruas】 as the last option.

“With the absence of their king, the soldiers here are restless, and most of the war potentials including the commanding officers died in the war, it would certainly be easier to take this country with such instability.”

“Isn’t it? I’m planning this to make it my foothold to declare my war towards this world.”

“...Two races had allied together, and this country has barely enough strength

to fight. The situation is steadily heading towards peace without conflict. But despite all of this, you bastards dare raise another hell again!"

To be honest, Judom plans to start an alliance with the other two nation once he have rebuilt this country from scratch. True that there are still many uncertainties between the two other races.

However, it would, at the very least, be beneficial to establish an agreement similar to anti-war treaty. So that they could little by little set foot with the alliance between 『Evila』 and 『Gabranth』

Although it may take time, Judom aimed a future where they would be able have a real alliance with two races and support one another.

And all of a sudden, this rebellion comes. It's as if he had predicted all of their movements. It was unimaginable for Judom for this person to strike at the country that was still in the middle of recuperating from their losses.

"Hell, huh? Kukukuku!"

Avoros lightly warded off Judom's glare and then,

"You surely don't believe that this age of war is about to end, do you?"

"...what about it?"

"It's not yet ending. Or rather, I won't let it end yet."

"You bastard, what are you trying to say?"

"My wish will only come true in times of war. If a war had ended, then I only need to start another one....to further the chaos."

"Bullshit!"

Coming from Judom, a pressure similar to a shockwave headed towards Avoros. But Avoros only narrowed his eyes and held a hand over the shock wave.

Bachin!

The shock wave dispersed as it is. And Avoros continued on with his words.

"Now let the world domination begins."

It was a very dark place...

He was not certain where he was. Even though his consciousness was strangely clearer, only darkness was present around as if he was enveloped by the blackness of it,

Why was he in such a place...when he tried to move to look for light, he couldn't. It seems his freedom was restricted.

However, because of his impatient budging, he discovered a small grain of light.

It looked like a star floating in the dark sky, yet it also gives off an impression of a firefly flying like a faint light in this darkness.

When he focused all of his senses towards it for a long time, the light gradually began to grow.

And it became the dazzling flash that attacked his whole body.

“...ku”

His body felt languid. Above all, his eyes felt heavy. Still, he tried to open his eyes slowly and saw a familiar ceiling, Although his right hand was trembling, he extended it out towards the nostalgic view.

He grasped his hands several times recognising that he could move it.

“I.....survived?”

His constant doubt why he was lying such a place was gradually returning back to him.

He looked at the shabbiness of his thin right hand to estimate how long he had been sleeping in here.

Even if he tried to move his body, it won't do as he wished. It's as if the muscles in his whole body had stiffened..

The only thing he could move was his right hand. However, it also drops on his chest as it reached its limit. Apparently, he didn't die...

While thinking such things, an unpleasant atmosphere covered his surroundings as he moved only his eyes in response. He did not know what it

was, but something was amiss.

At that time, the sound of door being opened was heard. Although someone came in, he couldn't ascertain who or what it was with his paralysed-like body of his.

While trying to maintain his consciousness, he stared ahead awaiting for the approaching visitor. And then he noticed the identity of the visitor which made him a little relieved. It was the person his father once introduced to him, Judom Lancaster.

His memory was hazy after that. When he tried to talk to Judom, he was terribly surprised but soon smiled in response. Somehow, that appearance looked similarly like his father.

Even if he was laughing on the outside, there was sadness and loneliness inside it, a complex smile mixed with regrets.

Thinking back, it might have been a smile so that he won't feel uneasy, but after knowing what happened to him, and why Judom jumped into this place.. For the first time, he understood the pain Judom had been going through.

Judom then took his frail body with him outside while protecting himself. When he thought of the half collapsed people as his allies, they fell into in a dangerous situation, and out from somewhere, a beautiful woman appeared and lent her assistance to them. But his consciousness faded at that time

When he woke up again, he was told of what happened after that and the most despairing news of his life.

Chapter 246 - Fall of Victorias

It sounded like a large explosion. First Princess Lilith of 【Victorias】 who was awoken by it cautiously headed towards the door.

Lilith opened the door slightly and tried to peer through from the outside, and then she saw someone running.

It was one of her caretakers, and apparently something urgent was happening based on her frenzy appearance.

When Lilith asked about the reason for her hurry, she replied that some suspicious intruders had entered the imperial castle and Judom was fighting to fend them off away. And the caretaker was instructed to escape with Lilith to a safe place.

And when she inquired about her mother's situation, the housemaid informed her that commander Vale had headed towards Queen Marice's location to protect her.

However, their relief was only for a brief moment. When they turned around and saw the approaching darkness, Lilith and the housemaid became frightened.

As that darkness was hit by the faint glow of the moon from an open window, they saw people wearing black clothes. It appears that there were two of them as the one in the front was holding another person.

“M-mother!?”

Yes, that other person being carried was no other than her mother, Marice. Her limp body was leaning at the person's left shoulder. And then she noticed the blood stained sword held in that person's right hand.

(Don't tell me mother was...)

“Please be relieved. Your Queen is still alive.”

The person at the rear answered Lilith's doubt with his voice, no, an unmistakable deep voice. It contained the gentle kindness similar to the same

voice who Lilith was longing for. But at the same time, it brought confusion to her as to why would he be here.

“It seems I found the princess.”

The person who was carrying Marice dropped her down the floor rather rudely. And in that moment, a wind passed through her cheeks.

Bushu!

Someone warm adhered close to her front. And before she knew it, the housemaid was slashed by a sword.

“R...un...aw...ay...Prin...cess!”

“Shut up. Just die already.”

Ensuring the maid was dead, the assailant pierced the sword out of her body.

“Noooooooooooooo!”

Lilith fell on her waist, helpless towards the scene in front of her.

“Oy! Don’t kill anyone all of a sudden!”

The voice that Lilith knows well turned to the other party who killed the housemaid.

“Hah? It seems you imbecile haven’t learned your own place, huh?”

“But ...”

“Shut the fuck up, I just killed only the unnecessary ones. Now then..”

“Hii!”

As Liliyn saw the blood-stained sword, she felt nauseous and covered her mouth with both of her hands.

“Tsk, so troublesome. Oi imbecile, quickly bring this girl along with us.”

The person who had a sword quickly carried Marice again, and left somewhere off.

Lilith couldn’t calmly look at situation in front of her, after being subjected to a nightmarish experience, she couldn’t give an ounce of care for her mother, Marice.

The remaining black robed person approached Lilith then,

“...Lilith”

Being called by her name, she unconsciously began to start crying in tears. When that person quietly took off his hood, the person that appeared was exactly the person she was longing for and tried to call his name in a hurry.

“Ta...Taishi...sama”

“I’m sorry Lilith... I’m really sorry.”

Lilith couldn’t hide her confusion when she saw Taishi’s expression filled with sorrow and regret.

“W-what...is ...really...going...on?”

At the crying Lilith’s question, Taishi only responded with a bitter expression.

“A-and...those clothes...why are you...wearing them...”

Even she was not stupid enough not to notice Taishi’s bitter expression and the clothes he was wearing. It was the same clothes the other person wore, who also killed her housemaid. Though she still couldn’t connect how those two points were related...

“This...this is wrong...even I don’t want this...but...but”

Lilith who saw Taishi’s mortified expression, was now convinced that he was allied with those people that raided the castle despite whatever reason he may have.

“Taishi...sama...”

“Lilith...Please come with me.”

“Eh?”

“....my Lord wishes to see you.”

“Lo...ord? W-what are you talking about?”

The Lord Taishi was talking about should be King Rudolph, Lilith’s father. So she thought that her father had come back, but based from Taishi’s attitude it doesn’t seem to be the case.

"I'm sorry... but I have no choice..."

Taishi took out a bottle from his bosom, and opened the lid of it. A sweet smell drifted towards Lilith, tickling her senses by that fragrance.

"Ta...Taishi....sa...ma..."

Lilith couldn't resist the sudden drowsiness that took over her as her consciousness quickly fell into the darkness. Taishi looked at her current appearance as if he was tormented by despair.

"I can't disobey him....I can't go against him....because such failure.....he won't let it pass!"

Taishi slowly lifted and carried Lilith as he began to walk away. He looked at his reflection on one of the mirrors and saw a wry smile plastered on his face.

"...what is with that face...haha"

While self-ridiculing himself, he moved away with heavy steps.

Avoros who was watching the starry sky from one of terraces, opened his mouth when he felt the approaching sign of someone.

"....Kainabi?"

"Ha!"

"Did the operation succeed?"

"Yes. Without any hiccups. Information came that Lilith and the Queen was captured."

"Splendid. It was surprising that the 《Impact King》 did not fight back and went running away."

After Avoros declared war with Judom, he ran away from that place at full speed. Back when he encountered him in the past, the same person bit his provocation and fought back furiously.

"That little lad seems to have grown up."

He made a reminiscing smile as he recalled the young Judom back then.

"What do you want me to do with him, my lord?"

"Let me see. That guy is a Rank SSS adventurer. Former position though. However, I could guarantee that his strength is true. Fighting him one-on-one is definitely dangerous."

"Is that how you see this man?"

"Hm? Ah, that's right, I forgot you don't know the power he possess. He is a man who knows all kinds of way to make a shockwave. Whether it's magical warfare, or melee fighting, it is dangerous to challenge him alone."

"For you to say this much of him..."

"What are you being shocked about. Did you not even understand a little of what I said? Weren't you the one who had scattered the attack of the 《Impact King》? And you didn't even talked to him. Although, because of that, he noticed it was your doing and dealt with your following attacks."

Kainabi bit his teeth in frustration while Avoros was making a bitter smile.

"For the time being, I sent the dead to chase after him, but apparently he was able to overcome them splendidly....now what should I do"

When he tilted his head on one side and brooded over the matter, his eyebrows twitched as if an idea hit Avoros. He looked at the cityscape spreaded under his eyes.

".....I see, so he plans to become an enemy of this nation then."

The expression he showed was somewhat distinctive which contained a thread of loneliness unlike a while ago.

"My Lord?"

"...it's nothing. An interesting thought just occurred to me."

"...?"

Avoros looked up at the starry sky again. And as if he was talking to someone, he muttered,

"I got a country now...kuku"

The news about 【Victorias】 having fallen in the hands of Avoros reached 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】

And naturally, it has entered Hiiro's ears as well. Initially, what he only knew about the that country were that fact that their king, Rudolph had gone mad, and that a substitute king, Judom replaced the former king.

Especially the news about Rudolph going mad, Hiiro was really astonished about it. Although it was also said that was transformed into a monster as a subordinate of Avoros.

(What a sarcastic way of living, that king's life that is)

It seems he loathed the 『Evila』 so much that he would do anything to destroy them. But as result of his blind fury, he was betrayed by the same 『Evila』 he despised of, and became a pathetic monster that couldn't speak properly.

Hiiro was not able to know what his long-cherished desire was. He did not know whether it was really all about making the world peaceful or wanted to make use of her daughter's death as a reason to incite a war.

Instead, he had his life twisted by someone through the circumstances around and pushed him far to the point his humanity died with him.

(For a human king to lose his humanity by becoming a mere monster....talk about an epic fail in life)

Although he thought that Rudolph would someday eventually die due to his deeds, Hiiro did not thought he would die by becoming a monster.

(And all of this was manipulated by that Template Maou brat)

Hiiro anticipated that that person would surely make his move somewhere, he didn't expect though that he would take over the 【Humas Nation】

Hiiro heard that report as he faced Leowald at the 『Throne Room』. Moreover, he also learned that 『Matar Deus』 was the one maneuvering behind the scenes.

“Hiiro, what do you think about their movement?”

“He said about world conquest, right?”

“....well, though I also know that...”

As if he was amazed by his words, Leowald sighed and did not bother to push on with his question. Because Avoros himself declared his intentions in their presence after all.

“Anyway, we better start gathering information about this event. Even if their ultimate goal is to conquer the world, the process involved will surely come to our way soon.”

“It is as Hiiro says, both beastmen and demons should cooperate to gather more information and prepare counter measures against them”

Chapter 247 - Clarification of the Knife

Yuhito, the renowned genius of 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】 was headed towards his laboratory, when he suddenly felt someone's presence inside when he was about to enter the room.

When he slowly opened the door to peer through inside, he leaked an amazed voice.

“My oh my, today we have quite an unusual guest”

The person inside had long ears just like what Yuhito has. And besides their similarly worn-out white coats, the person was very much alike with Yuhito.

However, that was natural. Because Rarashik, the one in front of him was his blood-related younger sister.

“Hmph, I didn't actually want to come in this place again.”

Her current appearance was just like that of a grumbling child. She then threw the plier-like tool on her hand towards the table.

“Aah! Please handle my tools carefully!”

In a hurry, Yuhito went to fetch the thrown tool at the table to check if there was any damage, and made a relieved sigh after.

“You still prioritize anything related to research as usual.”

“Nyohoho! You shouldn't say that Rara! This tool we have here is an innovative work of science!”

Looking closely at the tool on his hand, there were several switches, and when Yuhito pressed one of it, the tool twitched mechanically, and like a puzzle cube, it transformed into a minus screw driver.

“.....”

“Nyohoho! It can also change into something else if I push this!”

At the click of another button, it transformed into a hammer this time.

“See? See!? This is very handy! Let's play with it Rara!”

“As if I’ll do that!”

“Aah!?”

Rarashiki who was lent with the tool again, threw it out to the toolbox located at the corner of the room.

“Uuu...why are you so cruel to my stuffs...”

Yuhito began to lament the thrown tool while shedding tears from under his glasses, but in face of that, Rarashik only stared at him coldly.

In addition to being addicted to research, Yuhito cherished the things related just like a family to him. But it was because of this particular reason that began to irk her whenever he boasts to her the things he made which eventually became an annoyance to Rarashik.

“Anyway, leaving that aside...”

“Leaving it aside!? How heartless of you to say such things Rara! These precious tools are like my children!”

“Fine, fine, I understand. As an apology, let me treat you to some ale I have.”

“I’m not interested in any alcohol!”

In face of a furious Yuhito, Rarashiki could only sigh and scratch her head in irritation.

“Fine. I’m sorry about it. By the way, how is the analysis of the knife sample progressing?”

“Uu, you’re not sorry at all, meanie. Anyway, knife sample was it? You mean that thing?”

Yuhito pointed at the object wrapped in red cloth at the shelves.

“I see, so that’s the one.”

Rarashik grabbed the object and took the knife out of its wrapping to check the actual contents.

“Hiiro examined this right?”

“Nyohoho! Yes, he did! And it was really an astonishing sight! Nyohoho!”

"Well, that guy is more like a cheat really. Anyway, what did you guys find?"

"Houh~ are you perhaps curious about the results?"

"Well yeah, I'm a researcher at heart too. Even I'm curious to what this is, despite not finding anything strange about this knife Leo-sama requested."

She laid the top part of the knife on her shoulders as she carefully inspected the shiny orb on the handle.

"The blade is made from 『Daftgil』 of a Monarch Kraken. It has a property of being able to bypass any layered types of magic. However, I couldn't find any theory regarding this that could connect to the death of 『Aragorn』"

"Nyohoho! I agree, that's also the conclusion I have arrived as well. But that's normal, because the blade itself wasn't really the cause of the event~"

"...hah?"

Yuhito grabbed the knife from Rarashik who had been caught off guard by his words.

"This is not an ordinary crystal."

"You mean the gem?"

She looked at the beautiful gem fitted on the handle of the knife.

"...so it really wasn't just an ordinary gem, huh?"

"Nyohoho! That seems to be the case! Mr. Red Robe called this gem 『Gemini』. It seems there is another one of this somewhere."

"...what do you mean?"

"According to Mr. Red Robe, this gem exists with another pair. The first one acts like a transmitter."

"Transmitter?"

"And the other one acts like a receiver..... surely you get it with this?"

Yuhito raised his index finger as if to test Rarashik about it which the latter believed and brooded for awhile,

"I see! A transmitter...and then a receiver.. Now it makes sense! In other

words, this knife took all of 《Aragorn》's mana. Using the gem acting like a transmitter on the knife, it sent the deprived mana to the other gem."

"Nyohoho! As expected of my younger sister! That's exactly correct!"

With the properties of the 《Daftgil》, the knife was able to bypass any kind of defensive magic. Once it was stabbed on 《Aragorn》, the gem on the knife robbed the mana within. And through that gem, the deprived contents were passed on to the paired gem.

Because of this, 《Aragorn》 was depleted of all its mana. However, this shouldn't pose any problems. After a while, it's magic would eventually return back.

However, 《Gemini》 had another effect. It could transform life force into mana. By being stabbed with the knife, 《Aragorn》 that was deprived of its entire mana, had it's life force converted into mana, literally depleting all of 《Aragorn》

"So that's how they did it... life force is converted into magic...certainly, such magic tools do exists... I didn't expect to be used it like this though..."

"Such tools do exist, but not commercially available. Maybe the Predecessor Demon Lord personally provided this kind of thing."

"Probably so. I have never seen this gem in all of my life. But this one is most likely..."

When Rarashik showed a troubled expression with regards to the gem,

"Nyohoho! As expected of Rara. You really did notice about it. It's as you realized, this gem is now....useless."

Indeed. As Yuhito had said, 《Gemini》 had already become a mere gem. Perhaps it could only be used once and after that it would become an ordinary crystal gem.

"That's why we couldn't find anything about it...if we examined it a bit earlier we could have gotten some results, but because we were too late, it became an ordinary gem when we examined it."

"It feels like a hit to our researcher's pride, doesn't it? Nyohoho!"

Of course, what he meant was about Hiiro. For the two renowned geniuses of the beast race, they felt relieved that Hiiro was able to resolve the issue at hand, but at the same time, both of them had this feeling that they couldn't accept how the results turned out.

"...damn, so this knife is just really an ordinary knife, huh?"

"Let's be optimistic, at least we got ourselves some 『Daftgil』to analyse!"

"Yeah you're right, though I'm grateful this issue was resolved... we still lost something big"

Rarashik made a dark expression mixed with regret, but

"...you don't have to blame yourself about that."

"Eh?"

Yuhito expressed a gentle smile towards her.

"Although it's unfortunate that the tree died, but do know that we are still alive."

"....."

"My next research is about returning the favor to 『Aragorn』. I'll make sure this new research succeed!"

Apparently, the way Yuhito expressed his words was similar to how he treated 『Aragorn』 as a family, and since the said family was killed by 『Matar Deus』, he was going to strike back at them.

"Nahaha, it was foolish of them to make you this angry."

"Nyohoho! I want to dissect the Predecessor Demon Lord! Nyohoho!"

After that, the two talked about about their future..... when Rarashik heard what was needed to be heard, she then started to return to her home.

Although Yuhito tried to invite her to some tea, she coldly rejected his invitation, making Yuhito dismayed.

And as for what had transpired in here, no one knew except those two.

Chapter 248 - For now, Massage

Meanwhile at 【Xaous】, walking inside the castle with a rather grim expression unfit for the place he was heading to, was Aquinas, the head commander of the Demon Lord's directly supervised, Cruel Division.

His long crimson hair fluttered left and right as he walked hastily while maintaining proper courtesy.

He didn't even notice the admiring flushed expressions of the maids he passed by as he continued walking oblivious to such scenes.

He was headed towards the office where a girl named Eveam whom he would protect above all else, was there.

Upon arrival, he notified his presence by knocking on the door, and opened it once he got her permission to enter.

"Hoh, seems like you had a good night sleep. Your complexion have fairly improved"

When Aquinas saw the appearance of Eveam working, a smile made its way to his face and judged her expression so, because her skin had a different glow compared to before.

This however made Eveam look down shamefully and said,

"T-that's why I said sorry about it last time! B-besides, I will properly sleep as I had been warned!"

"Umu, a fine answer."

To the nodding Aquinas, Eveam shook her head a little to clear away the heat from her flustered expression and heard about the details of his visitation.

Yesterday, a bad news regarding 【Victorias】 reached 【Xaous】. She never expected for Avoros to take over the the human nation, much more, when the rumour was confirmed by her trustworthy subordinates.

And Aquinas visited her office to ask if there was any new information regarding that matter.

"I'm sorry. I have no updates yet regarding it."

"I see."

"Are you worried about something?Judom's matters perhaps?"

"....."

"I heard that he was rebuilding the country from the bottom alone, but I don't know what became of him after Avoros' assaulted the kingdom."

"Yes, I'm worried about that."

"I see. But even if he was renowned the strongest in their nation..."

Although Eveam anxiously leaked such words,

"No, I don't believe that man would have died from that."

"Aquinas"

"I've fought with him, so I have witnessed the true strength of that man. Even if that man is outnumbered, he could survive that onslaught through his wisdom and power."

"...I see, if you say it like that then perhaps what you said might be true."

Eveam expressed a relieved a smile on her face. To be honest, Eveam doesn't actually understand Judom's true strength.

She only met him once in her childhood. But Aquinas had a mortal combat with that person. The connection from their struggle seems to have built a mutual relationship that considered each other as equal comrades.

If Aquinas believed that Judom was alive, then so was Eveam who believed Aquinas' strength.

And so the matter about Judom came to an end, but then someone's name surfaced in Aquinas' mind.

"Speaking of someone, any news regarding Hiiro?"

"Eh?"

"Eh is not a proper answer. It was Hiiro who forced you to sleep and made you realize that you were overworking your body too much, you know."

"M-mu.. why do I feel like you're implying something else?"

"Fu, it's just your imagination."

But in reality, Aquinas is a little nudged about this matter. He was actually a little jealous about Hiiro influencing Eveam's indecisiveness which he couldn't do anything back then, so he couldn't help tease Eveam who was listening to Hiiro's advices every now and then.

"News about Hiiro you ask? Even though several days had passed already and not a single update coming from him, ~muu that foolish Hiiro! Always making me worried!"

An amused smile made its way to his face when he saw the appearance of this girl frankly grumbling towards a certain young man.

"Well, he's probably fine despite not reporting about it. And besides, can you imagine him dying from such a place?"

".....not really."

"And I'm sure that guy is delighting in a delicious meal or enjoying another unusual book he found over there, right?

".....very likely."

Eveam had an amazed face when she imagined easily what was surmised about Hiiro.

"Besides, setting aside Hiiro, right now we have to deal matters regarding the Predecessor Demon Lord."

".....you're right."

All of a sudden, both turned serious as the air around them became heavy.

"World Domination... if we believe what that person said, then the humans were his first agenda, is that how this goes?"

"No, that's not it. 【Pasion】 was attacked, but they were not thoroughly destroyed while 【Victorias】 was in the midst of a confusion. So he probably took advantage of this and made his priority to take over the human nation."

"Rather than took it, he obtained a country. And he will no doubt rule over

the humans from now on.”

Eveam remained silent in face of Aquinas’ words. Based on Avoros’ character, he would surely rule over the human like a tyrant. It won’t be surprising if he decided to kill those who opposed him.

And eventually all the people will fall upon their fear of him and become submissive to his will.

“What country do you think is his next target Aquinas?”

“It’s highly probable that we would be the last target as our military force is very high right now.”

“.....then, 【Pasion】?”

“Umu, perhaps some movements have already began to mobilise over there.”

“Wait a minute! Hiiro is over there you know!”

“I know, that’s why if they ever did made movements over there, I pity them. If they angered Hiiro who is present over there, they are likely going to be crushed by him instead.”

“.....haa, whatever happens, Hiiro, please come back safely”

Although Eveam had a lot of insecurities, it seems she desired the safety of Hiiro the most.

“Besides, Ornoth is over there as well.”

“Now that you mention it, that’s right.”

But even so, Hiiro was a big existence inside Eveam’s world as she didn’t realize the strong feelings painted on her expression which made Aquinas once again chuckle in amusement as he thought of his dear friend’s safety.

(.....I hope nothing happens over there)

Under the pleasant blue sky, the rumored protagonist was....

“.....this feels ~ oh ~..... great”

In the guest room given to stay, lying face down in an underpants only appearance, Hiiro was being massaged. Moreover, the one doing it was...

“How is it? Can you feel it against your back?”

His outer appearance was that of a wolf-man. It was Ornoth of Eveam's directly supervised 《Cruel Division》who was massaging Hiiro right now.

“Ah, I can feel it. This is...yeah, give me more.”

“I see. Then I'll let you feel more. How's this?”

Ornoth began to massage Hiiro's buttocks and hips. His hands tracing Hiiro's lean legs.

“ “ Awawawawa! “ “

Besides Hiiro and Ornoth in the place, there were two people, two girls in fact, hiding their face with both of their hands.

“M-Mimiru-chan!”

“M-Muir-chan!”

Indeed, it was in fact those two girls. However, although they knew it was obviously just a simple massage, somehow they were strangely excited in face of that spectacle.

If one would only listen to their voices, such words could certainly cause some strange delusions to be awakened, but Hiiro was definitely and only receiving a massage right now.

However, it's not... the usual massage. Both hands of Ornoth was wrapped in red light.

The day after his first day in 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】, he met Ornoth. He was actually an informant of the 【Evila】and went back and forth so many times.

Due to the hectic nature of his mission, Ornoth wasn't able to fulfil his promise back then at the 《Grand Fortuna Library》, but since his next return would take a while, he took the opportunity to teach Hiiro about the basics of the 《Crimson Aura | Taishakuten》

(TL Note: See Below 1)

Apparently, Ornoth told him that he couldn't start the lessons until he is able to freely release the 《Red Energy | Shaki》at his own will.

(TL Note: See Below 2)

That's why Ornoth is massaging Hiiro so that he could first help him wear the 《Red Energy | Shaki》

By directly being in contact with the 《Red Energy | Shaki》, it becomes easier to imagine the sense of being clad in 《Red Energy | Shaki》

It was true that Hiiro could wear the 《Red Energy | Shaki》 when in 《Peerless Mode | Tenka Musou Mode》, however it was a time constrained technique and very inefficient as it consumes his stamina and mana to a great extent.

Moreover, though he was clad in 《Red Energy | Shaki》, Hiiro was actually unconscious of it, or rather he was forced to feel that way, becoming unable to grasp the sense of it.

Thus, Ornoth not only massages him simply, but also throws a small amount of 《Red Energy | Shaki》 to Hiiro's body.

He said that this method would relax his body and improve the blood flow throughout his body, so that it would be easier to handle the 《Red Energy | Shaki》

So for the time being, in order to get massaged in such a way, Hiiro returned to his human form from his beastman appearance.

"At any rate, this doesn't feel hot at all. When you were fighting in the duel back then, you seemed to have burned your opponent."

Ornoth's opponent in the duel was the Second Prince of 『Gabranth』, Lenion. At that time, Ornoth's full body was clad in 《Red Energy》, and when Lenion seized his arms, he got burned as a consequence.

"That might be so. But I'm not applying heat right now."

"That's possible?"

"《Crimson Aura》 was originally called 《Fiery Aura》. The name was called like that because it was technique that enables one to wear a burning aura around the body like a scorching flame. And speaking of that, weren't you able to wear one yourself in the duel before? You didn't know of this?"

(TL Note: See Below 3)

When Hiiro was in 《Peerless Mode | Tenka Musou Mode》, he was certainly clad in a red aura, but at that time, he didn't feel it was hot at all. His opponent at that time should felt it as well. Ornoth nodded in response as Hiiro explained these things.

"I see, in other words, your figure at that time was solely to defend your body with it, and not used as an offensive measure to your opponent."

"...care to explain?"

"《Crimson Aura》 has two active modes, 『Stillness | 静』 & 『Motion | 動』. At 『Stillness | 静』, your defensive ability improves rapidly. And while at 『Motion | 動』, an intense heat is applied to your 《Red Energy | Shaki》 as an offensive power..."

Hiiro also felt that his defensive power not comparable than the usual when he was in 《Peerless Mode | Tenka Musou Mode》 that time. Although his offensive power had not changed that much.

However, for Hiiro, he did not worry about that as he could use the 《Word Magic》 character 『Herculean Strength | 剛力』 to compensate for his lack of offensive power.

"Well then, I think we are about done in here. You can stand now."

Hiiro obediently followed his words and stood up. His body felt lighter than usual. An ordinary massage wouldn't be able to give this kind of effect. It seems Ornoth poured a considerable amount of 《Red Energy | Shaki》 into his body.

That said though, in face of Hiiro's underpants only appearance, Muir and Mimiru further blushed to beet red. And incidentally, Tenn and Camus were nearby but were only watching attentively to the adults.

"Let's start with the basics then."

Although Hiiro gulped in a form of suspense, for some reason, the other observers also gulped in sync with him. When they closely watched Ornoth's expression, his mouth slowly opened.

".....you let yourself go loosely like this, then go round and round! And finally, you go oof! Just like that!"

.....hah?

Chapter 249 - The Power of Crimson Aura

Everyone present who heard that, all felt a mild headache in their heads. They lost track of reality when Ornoth began to speak in a very strange manner.

However, Hiiro is helpless about this matter. Appearance wise, he seemed a bit of a slackless guy, so he couldn't believe that such words would find their way to the mouth of such a man.

Moreover, the person himself was serious about it which made Hiiro knit his eyebrows in confusion.

".....can you please repeat it again?"

For the time being, he wanted to confirm it again.

"Mu? You didn't hear it right? Let me repeat. You have to let yourself go loosely like this, then go around and round! And finally you go oof."

Apparently, he didn't hear it by mistake.

(....if only I could read that scroll, but no matter how I tried, the content still looked like moon runes to me.)

Amongst the scrolls inside the 《Grand Fortuna Library》, he saw one regarding the 《Crimson Aura》. And of course, it was all thanks to Ornoth's help. However, neither of them couldn't understand the contents of it, much less, anyone else.

That's why Hiiro is enduring Ornoth's way of teaching him through his own take on it.

At first Hiiro thought this was just a joke, but something tells him it was worth listening to Ornoth's manner of describing it.

"Mu? What's wrong? You have a face as if you heard something unbelievable?

".....haa, I won't beat around the bush, to be frank.....I didn't understand a single thing you had said"

"Hah? Why so? I thought I made the explanation easy to understand..."

This person seriously lacks common sense.

"No, I do get the concept behind it. I just don't know how to practice it even if you told me to do so."

"I see. So that's the problem, huh?"

"Rather, aren't you the one in charge of training the Evila soldiers? Haven't you noticed the strange looks the soldiers give you?"

".....now that you mention it, whenever I teach them, they had this mystified looked as if they were brooding about something"

.....seriously, this thickheaded guy

Hiiro gave his condolence towards the soldiers of Evila. Ornoth's manner of teaching, just like awhile ago, was a mystery. Since the soldiers had their own standpoints, they couldn't ask back many times against Ornoth. That's why the only thing they could do was to desperately interpret those words by themselves.

"Anyway, can you speak more logically?"

"M-mu... logical, huh?"

Apparently, Ornoth's mastery in teaching seems to be a close to rock bottom. Although teaching by instinct is also important at times, it's not suitable to teach it if one couldn't grasp the theory behind it as it would be hard to convey the message to the other party, much like right now.

"Haa, then what does that 'go loosely like this' mean? How do you do it? Can you perhaps show it to me instead?"

As he requested, Ornoth shut eyes, and suddenly the excessive mana inside him dissipated away from his body. Then, he began to mix his mana and life force together inside his abdomen, and distributed it towards his blood vessels.

Hiiro was using 『Visual | 視』 character to see how the process works inside Ornoth's body.

(I see, go loosely meant like that. And go around and round means the mixing of those two I guess. And finally the oof is...)

When Ornoth opened his eyes, red aura gushed out of his body as if his blood spouted out from within.

(So that's oof, huh?....now I know why it was really hard to explain it with mere words alone...)

That's what he arrived at after clarifying Ornoth's words. He could probably get the sense of it. But it was also true that practicing it is difficult with mere words alone.

"I don't feel any heat coming from it though, is this perhaps 『Stillness | 静』?"

"Correct. It's the defensive stance of 《Crimson Aura·Stillness》"

"....I wonder how strong this can hold?"

Hiiro recognized that the power surging from Ornoth was incomparable to what he normally senses in him. It was almost equal to his 《Peerless Mode | Tenka Musou Mode》

This is the evidence of a practitioner of this magic. That's why Hiiro is really interested how strong it is.

"Fumu, if you want to know, then hit me with all you got."

"O-o-ornoth-san! You shouldn't! It's dangerous!"

Muir quickly warned him as Mimiru agreed with her by nodding her head many times. But Ornoth only responded with a grin and,

"Say, Hiiro, they say it's dangerous to continue, what do you think? Want to stop?"

It seems Ornoth actually went on provoking Hiiro. He has confidence in his 《Crimson Aura》

If that's the case, then it was perfect, Hiiro held his fist back to make sure it hits Ornoth.

"I'm inside a room so it's hard for me to run away, that's why bring it on. Don't hold back against me."

Hiiro didn't want to use his magic. Honestly, if he used 《Word Magic》, he would be able to damage his opponent without difficulty. 『Penetrate | 貫通』 is

one that could work, and 『Nullification | 無効化』 would be a sure kill.

However, that betrays his objective. Hiiro wanted to confirm the full strength of Ornoth's defense. Hiiro was perhaps among the ones with a very high level in this world, his physical stats is now probably reaching the likes of Leowald's caliber.

(If that's the case, I'll give you my best punch..)

Magic began to concentrate on his fist. Then he bended his knees and kicked the floor instantly. He approached Ornoth's chest in just a few steps.

Ornoth only stood there with an immovable posture. Hiiro then released his clenched fist towards Ornoth's stomach with all his strength.

Everyone who witnessed it understood that extraordinary power was surging from Hiiro's fist. Perhaps it has the power capable of killing any Rank S monster in one blow.

"Haa!"

A loud roar was made as the two collided. However,

".....now do you understand with this?"

Ornoth calmly said those words.

(Ku....it's too hard!?)

However, it's hardness wasn't just like an iron.

(It's as if I'm punching a massive tire)

Hiiro withdrew his fist and watched the 『Red Energy | Shaki』 covering Ornoth's body. The way his punch felt was that of striking a tremendously thick and tough rubber.

It was as if the shock from his fist was absorbed upon impact. However, Ornoth's stance seems to have become a bit disarrayed.

Ornoth only fell on his back a little and did not get blown away.

"Hiiro, I know what you are thinking right now."

"....."

“Because I had the same face when I did it with my mentor back then to teach me about 『Crimson Aura』. You’re shocked that I wasn’t blown away right? And you still couldn’t believe that I was not damaged a little by it”

“.....tsk”

He unconsciously clicked his tongue. His mood became sour when Ornoth guessed it right. Especially, his current situation.

“You don’t have to be pessimistic about this.”

“.....?”

“You understand from that impact right? Because it can also deal with magic.”

When Hiiro knew Ornoth could use the 『Crimson Aura』, he requested to be taught about it. Because he wanted to confirm the magic tolerance through practice.

And as demonstrated, 『Red Energy | Shaki』 was really a convenient defensive option.

“This state raises the tolerance against physical and magic attack to its utmost limit. However, even if it could cut the power of the physical and magical attacks by half, this state also has a backslash.”

Indeed, while on this state, even if the opponent uses magic or attack with a sword, it would be almost impossible to penetrate because it could nullify the damage. However, when faced with a force that the surpasses the current defensive power, one could likely received a direct hit.

Still, for such a defensive ability, this is more than a wonderful blessing to Hiiro. Moreover, they still haven’t gotten to the 『Motion | 動』part, the real deal of the skill.

“By the way, I won’t be demonstrating 『Motion | 動』. There is a big possibility this room might burn down to ashes.”

Although it was disappointing for the its demonstration, for Hiiro however, knowing about 『Stillness | 静』 was enough for him. Besides, he was sure, 『Motion | 動』 would be another dreadful skill to see.

He already saw a bit of it from Ornoth’s duel before.

"Now then, it's your turn to try it Hiiro."

At the mention of those words, Hiiro had considerably gotten excited to try it. His heart was still pounding from excitement. His face was probably making that of an agitated young boy. But he couldn't help it, because he can't help suppress this excitement inside of him.

(First is the 'go loosely' part..)

He pulled out the excessive power from his body. But then...

"H-Hiiro-sama.....?"

Because Mimiru had suddenly called for him, he faced her first.

"What's the matter?"

"Um...you see...if it'spossible....um"

Mimiru makes fleeting glances towards Hiiro while her cheeks were dyed red. And it seems Muir was also acting the same way, is there something wrong?

"Hiiro...put some clothes on"

"He's right! Just looking at your naked body is already ruining my day!"

Camus brought some clothes to him while Tenn who was at Camus shoulder was shaking his head murmuring 'good grief/yare-yare'

Hiiro then connected the reason why the two girls were blushing and decided to put some clothes on. Ornoth allowed it because he no longer needed to be massaged anymore.

"Alright, time to try it!"

While preparing a thorough stance and expressing enthusiasm with his words, he suddenly realized that the 《King's Tree | Ouki》 seems to be in an uproar.

And the cause of that, Arnold, suddenly barged inside and shouted something to everyone present in the room.

"Oi! We are under attack!"

It was an enemy attack.

Chapter 250 - The Newborn Power of Zangeki

Crimson Aura -> Grand Red Aura | Taishakuten

Fiery Aura -> Grand Fiery Aura

Red Energy -> Red Energy | Shaki

Looking down from the terrace of the 《King's Tree》, there were strange figures about the size of a human being, wandering around the city.

The way they moved was similar to that of zombies in horror movies.

(What in the world is that?)

From his position, he couldn't clearly distinguish it because of the distance. However, as Arnold had said, these existences could be dangerous.

While observing the said existences, one of it caught one of the civilians. Moreover, the way it captured the civilian was very uncanny. Because small-like tentacles grew from its body and coiled around the civilian's body.

And what's surprising is that the bound captives are pushed inside its body.

"That's apparently a doll made of water."

Tenn who was at Hiiro's shoulder revealed the nature of that existence.

"A doll?"

"And perhaps the practitioner is manipulating it somewhere nearby."

According to Tenn, this spell was a variant from water magic, and these eerie existences currently attacking are water dolls created by the said practitioner of it.

"But with these numbers, I don't think they were commanded with a complex instruction."

"But they are attacking the citizens you know? Isn't that proof they can distinguish their friends and foes alike?"

"They were probably ordered to attack any person nearby."

"... certainly water dolls aren't considered a 'person'. And they haven't touched the buildings since they arrived too."

In other words, what Tenn said had a high chance it's likely true.

"Hiiro....what should we do?"

Camus inquired his orders from his sides. Arnold and Ornoth had promptly moved to rescue the civilians. And from his vantage point, most of the military personnel were also mobilized, doing the same thing, fighting these dolls.

Among them was Muir. She was wielding the chakrams on both of her hands like the one when she fought with Eunice, but apparently such physical attacks were ineffective against the water bodies of such opponent.

"Even if I don't do anything, those guys are there to stop it. And besides, the Beast King is also there."

He saw the Beast King instructing the soldiers from his position.

"Then...we just watch?"

"If you want to fight against them, you can do so. I won't stop you."

"What...will Hiiro do then?"

"Wait and see. I have no obligation to help them for free. And like I said a while ago, even if I don't help, those guys will do something about it."

Although the enemies were a lot, appearance-wise, they weren't that skillful. Their movements were just trying to push the bound civilians into their bodies and let them die from suffocation which was easy to intercept due to their slow movements.

Looking at one of the scene where they forcibly pulled one of civilians out of its body, there doesn't seem to have any hidden trap laying ahead, so Hiiro judged that the beast men could handle this matter alone.

"Che, Hiiro is such a kill-joy"

"Whatever. I just find it tiresome."

"Eeh, and here I thought we could try the power of the newborn Zangeki-

chan~”

Since Tenn's integration with 《Zangeki》, Hiiro hadn't tested it in a trial run. But that's because he couldn't find the opportunity to test it, although he heard some enlightening information from Tenn, Hiiro hadn't tried using it.....yet.

“Mu...this situation is certainly convenient to test it and also..”

“They interrupted.....Hiiro's lessons.”

It was exactly as Camus had said, when the enemy attacked, they took valuable hours of Hiiro that could have been used to train with Ornoth which caused him further annoyance as he remembered regarding that matter.

“.....yeah, a little angry because of it.”

“Oh! Then you'll do it?”

Tenn got thrilled as his sparkled with excitement.

“Yup. Let's end this quickly so that I can continue my practice on 《Grand Red Aura》”

“Ukiiii!”

Jumping joyfully, Tenn immediately moved to the end of one branch and began to cry in a loud voice.

Leowald and the other beast men fighting, glanced to Tenn's direction as they heard his cry.

“That idiot, why did he have to do that?”

However, it seems it had also stopped the movements of the water dolls because of it. Hiiro then realized that cry was maybe for restricting their movements.

“Hiiro! Come over here quickly!”

Even if he was waving at him to come over there, it's kind of difficult you know? Because all eyes were focused on that place.

He thought he could do it quietly, but what's done is done, so Hiiro went to Tenn's location with heavy steps.

“Wait for me Nitouryuu.”

“Un...I’ll be waiting.”

He faced Camus before proceeding towards Tenn.

Muir and Arnold reacted to the sudden voice that resounded their surroundings. When they shifted their sights towards the 《King’s Tree》, they saw the 『Spirit』 contracted to Hiiro, Tenn.

That height was enough to overlook the entire city. And then they saw Hiiro coming towards Tenn while scratching his head.

“O-ojisan, is that?”

“Yeah, really, what the heck is that guy planning to do?”

Hiiro had always done extraordinary things, but from where he sees it, that guy doesn’t seem to be that motivated at all. There wasn’t any reason for him to make his move either, but right now, he was reluctantly doing one.

That said, despite this kind of attention centered on him, surely that guy will accomplish something astonishing again without fail even if he was hesitant about it. So Arnold and Muir looked forward to what he would do again.

Then, Tenn jumped on the katana Hiiro unsheathed from his waist, thrust towards the sky.

Suddenly, an intense light emanated from the katana.

“Do it exactly as I told you Hiiro.”

“I know, just focus on doing your part right. I’ve practised this many times before I came here. Surely you know of that?”

“Fi~ne~”

Suddenly, Tenn’s body glowed brightly who was at the tip of his katana. But from those seeing below, they may think that the sword was emitting the light itself.

Tenn then faced the view of the entire city. When he finished watching the whole city, he nodded with agitation.

“Okee~ the enemy is~ the country!”

“《Zangeki》.....”

Soon after, Tenn jumped up to the sky from his position. The light wrapping Tenn became brighter. Just like a small sun rising towards the sky.

Then, Hiiro made a posture with his katana as if he was throwing a javelin. His eyes were locked-on onto Tenn who was at the sky. They were eyes aiming to hit a target.

Hyun!

And as everyone saw Hiiro’s figure, he threw 《Zangeki》 towards Tenn.

Before Tenn could dodge, it pierced right through his body. It looked like a perfect kill if it was the usual weapon. However, the next moment,

Boom!

Suddenly, Tenn’s body swelled up, even engulfing the pierced katana, then a big explosion occurred.

“Attack them all.....《Flash Fireworks》”

(TL Note: New Skill! 《Senkou Hanabi - 閃光花火》)

Countless light bullets rained down the entire city. It’s as if a meteor shower manifested. Muir and the other citizens who saw that scene desperately tried to escape, but it rained down at a tremendous speed and crashed one after another without mercy.....

.....to the numerous water dolls present.

The water dolls penetrated by the light were instantly dispersed into smoke. Those who were caught inside the dolls were also penetrated by the light but was left unhurt which left them all astray.

And so easily the numerous water dolls present in the city vanished.

While everyone was still dumbfounded by the situation, Hiiro nodded in satisfaction in face of the spectacle before him. Then Tenn who they thought had died, fell from the sky while spinning like a small object.

He made a V-sign with a bright smile on his face when he splendidly landed besides Hiiro.

“See that? I’m the strongest!”

“Are you kidding me? It was my power that annihilated them all.”

“Oh... both of you were great.”

Seeing Camus clapping with his hands, Hiiro just shrugged his shoulders.

“Well in the end, it was a brilliant debut.”

“Ukii! This much is too easy for 『Zangeki-chan』 and myself!”

Tenn looked delighted again, but almost everyone at the bottom were staring at them with eyes asking for an explanation, so Hiiro was troubled what to do.

Chapter 251 - Flash Fireworks

Meanwhile, a person was sitting on the ground of a hill not far from 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】. That person wore a black robe, and a magic formation was etched on the ground he sat on.

The magic formation enclosed the small knife stabbed in the ground with the said person in the middle. One would say some kind of ritual was actually in motion. However, the knife suddenly made a sound and then broke into pieces.

After looking at the remains of the small knife, the person stood up quietly and looked at distant city of 【Pasion】 reflected from the eyes inside the black hood. At that moment, someone approached that person.

“Stop with that foolish behavior, Kirz-san”

(TL Note: New name. (Kirutsu | キルツ). I read it as Kirzu or Kirz maybe. Feel free to suggest a better name for it.)

That person also wore black clothing. As for the voice, it had a tone of a woman mixed with amazement and anger.

“Oh? Seems like I’ve been found out.”

The person removed his hood and began to stretch his head from the sides. Appearance-wise, he had a face of a middle aged man who had grown a beard out of laziness. He also wore black sunglasses as he made a friendly smile to the woman.

“That’s not the point here! Why did you attack 【Pasion】 without His Majesty’s permission!”

“Don’t worry about it. What’s done is done. Also, I’m kind of hungry. You brought some food?”

“Listen to what the other people are telling you about!”

“Dahahaha! That’s impossible~ I hate long tedious sermons~”

“And you call yourself a good adult! Idiot!”

The man called Kirz disregards his angry partner and turned his eyes to 【Pasion】 , no, to one specific person.

“...hey Ranko-chan”

“W-what now? And also I told you not to call me by that name! It’s Rankonis. RAN-KO-NIS!”

(TL Note: New name (Rankonis - ランコニス) Read it as Rankonis or Lankonice maybe. Feel free to suggest better names for it.)

“...what’s the name of that guy again?”

“You’re ignoring me again ...haa, anyway, that guy? Who are you referring to?”

“Can’t you see him? The youngster standing at the summit of 《King’s Tree》”

“Seriously, I can’t see this youngster you know. Do you know how far we are from the city? I don’t possess 《Hawk Eyes》 like you do.”

Then Kirz looked as if he was unprepared for that response,

“Eh? You don’t see him? Hmm, ah! Then didn’t he made his debut last time? The youngster who quarrelled with His Majesty.”

“...ah, I do remember. So what did he do this time?”

“Well, it’s not really a big deal. But he somehow managed to send my magic away instantly.”

“That’s a big deal! Is it really true that that boy manage to deflect Kirz-san’s magic away!?”

“Seems so. I was only testing that magic, I didn’t expect to be countered so easily.”

The eyes hidden under the black sunglasses shined a little as the corners of Kirz’s mouth raised into a smirk.

“Haa... I give up. So? What do you plan to do if His Majesty finds out about this?”

“Eh? You won’t tell him about this, right Ranko-chan?”

"I won't, of course. Well, I'm willing if you want to, should I tell His Majesty about this right now?"

"Dahaha! Please no."

"Seriously. Let's go then. Your business is finished in here right?"

"Yeah.....to be honest, I'm not really that interested in the war His Majesty is causing, but I change my mind, there are a lot of interesting people in here."

"Hm? Did you say something?"

"It's just your imagination."

Kirz began to wear his hood again. He gave 【Pasion】 a last look before he proceeded to follow Rankonis while tidying his robe.

(.....I was led to believe that there weren't anything interesting in here. But, although His Majesty didn't have any expectation to these beast men, I'm glad I came and observed them. Especially that guy who easily negated my magic.....this is going to be an interesting war)

Then, soon after, the beast men soldier rushed to this place, but they were a bit too late as they only found the remains of the magic formation and the shattered knife.

"Explain what happened Hirooooooooo!"

Arnold hastily marched towards the 《King's Tree》 where Hiro was currently located. At his back was Muir and some familiar faces he knew of.

Naturally, he expected this to happen, but he doesn't have any willingness or obligation to do so.

"No."

And because Ornoth was also there, he said,

"Let's continue our training."

He wanted as soon as possible to continue their lessons on 《Grand Red Aura》. Of course, there's also 《Zangeki》 to test as well, but the first one was on Hiro's top priority list.

However, Ornoth also had an expression as if he wanted an explanation to the spectacle he witnessed a while ago.

But apart from the training he desired of, Hiiro was not in the mood to do anything else, much less, to explain what had just happened, making him stagger from his decisions.

“H-Hiro-sama, were you perhaps the one who did that awhile ago?”

Mimiru asked him with a slightly confused expression, apparently she didn't know it was him who made that spectacle.

“Yeah. I just wanted to try something out that time.”

“E-even so! Hiro-sama, you just saved the country you know!”

“Exactly! Hiro, thanks to you, we were able to put those things out quickly. At least, let the people express their gratitude to you.”

“Hoh, then give me a part of this continent...”

“Pardon me for the interruption, but this and that are two different matters to settle. Even if you didn't help Hiro, I would have managed to do something about them.”

Since Hiro had witnessed Leowald's true strength, his words weren't some cheap words to show off. Yes, it could have taken longer, but even without Hiro's help, those things would have been annihilated by Leowald himself.

As expected of the Beast King, in face of that passionate commitment to his country, Hiro couldn't say anything about it.

“Anyway, my answer is still...”

“That's right little missies, because I'm a 『Spirit』~”

“.....a no...”

“The attack awhile ago was called 《Flash Fireworks》, you saw it right, how I exploded?”

“.....”

“You see, that's my inherent ability..... oi Hiro, why are you grabbing my head so roughly, it hurts you know ?”

Even though he was trying to conceal their abilities, the blabbering mouth of this animal just went on showing off in face of Muir and Mimiru.

“Seriously...”

“Isn’t it fine? There’s no harm telling them about it! And beside I kind of like having this spotlight once in awhile!”

In face of the whining child-like foolish Tenn, Hiiro could only sigh helplessly and gave his permission to continue explaining it.

Certainly, majority of what happened before was Tenn’s ability, not Hiiro’s, so there’s no problem to telling them about this. And besides, that guy despite his excessive child-mindedness, won’t say things that would put them in a disadvantage for the both of them.

Surprisingly, Leowald was having a keen interest on Tenn’s exaggerated explanation on it.

Well, that’s natural. Because to them, Hiiro had surpassed the level they could reach in their wildest imagination.

Since Tenn had fused with 《Zangeki》, his sword have the power of the 『Spirit』 within.

In other words, 《Magic-Nullification》. Tenn had erased the water dolls’ existences.

For someone like Tenn who is very sensitive to hostility, he could easily grasp the enemies at a certain distance.

And then, when 《Zangeki》 pierced Tenn, 《Flash Fireworks》, a firework-like explosion occurred. And the scattered Tenn rained down towards the enemy as light bullets.

Because there was no harm to those who weren’t deemed hostile, even if they were hit by the light bullet, they wouldn’t affected by it. If they are using magic though, of course, that too would be negated.

Simply put, 《Flash Fireworks》 has the effect of invalidating all magic within a certain range.

While Hiiro sighed once again as he saw Tenn’s appearance, suddenly,

“Hiroooooooooooooo!”

A voice he had been long used to carried through the hallway. Approaching him, was a white object, who was no other than the Cat Girl, Crouch.

“I saw it meooooooooow! As expected, Hiiro is so amazing meooooooooow!”

Since Hiiro felt a bad feeling of getting hugged again, he instinctively wrote the character 『Shift | 交代』

(Forgive me, Bird Man)

Hiiro had made use of the same trick once again.

“Gafun!?”

In that moment, Hiiro exchanged places with Barid, the leader of the 『Gabranth Three』, and received the same body blow again from Crouch.

“No way! It’s Barid again meow! Whyyyyyy!”

“Cut....it....out!”

Everyone who witnessed Barid’s helpless appearance had eyes full of pity towards him.

Chapter 252 - The Modest Love of the Two

“Wait, what? You’re returning already?”

Hiiro was speechless when Ornoth notified of his abrupt return. He wiped out the enemies in order to resume the training on 《Grand Red Aura》 which had been interrupted by the invasion just recently.

But despite all of this, Ornoth had told him that he needed to return to 【Xaous】. He said he needed to settle some private matters on the other side.

Well, Hiiro was fortunate enough to be even trained by Ornoth even if it’s just the basics, so he really didn’t have the right to detain him really. Ornoth has work and others things he wants to do.

“I’m sorry about this Hiiro. Since this side was attacked, we need to be wary of any attacks over there too. Besides, I need to deliver the gathered information this time to Her Majesty.”

“...haa, well you already taught the basics anyway, so I’ll endure for now with this.”

“You don’t have to be disappointed. I taught you what’s necessary. Now, you only need to train on it repeatedly.”

“Thanks, want to me to send you over there as thanks?”

“Mu? Oh right, please do. Also if possible I want you to send my men along with me to the other side.”

“Sure, I don’t mind it.”

“Thanks, it would be helpful.”

After that, Hiiro sent them to 『Xaous』 using 『Transfer | 転送』 character, once Ornoth briefed his subordinates that they would be sent together with him to save time. And Hiiro was left alone.

“Hiiro...what will you do now?”

Since Camus had asked what they would do now, he decided to train on the

『Grand Red Aura』 for the time being. Since he somehow got the gist of the technique, he wanted to use most of the day to train on getting used to it.

“Let me see.....hm? By the way, where is that animal?”

He only noticed it now that there wasn’t anyone on his shoulders, Tenn’s who was usually present wasn’t there right now. After proudly finishing his explanation on 『Flash Fireworks』, he came back to his usual spot.

However, before he even noticed, even before the time he talked to Ornoth, Tenn was already gone. When he asked Camus if he knew something about it, he only gave a slight nod.

“Yes....he went with Muir.”

“Chibi? Why again...”

“They wanted to know...how he met Hiiro.”

As Camus had said, it seems Muir and Mimiru was curious as to how he and Tenn encountered each other.

So while Tenn was at Muir’s place, he could use his spare time to train on 『Grand Red Aura』 at the spare room he was lended to.

“I see, how about you?”

“Um....only want to be with Hiiro.”

His loyal heart really never cease to impress him,

(Although I don’t mind him coming with me, I’m just doing this because I’m free you know...)

But Camus who had his usual expressionless visage stared at Hiiro without batting an eye. It was obvious from his eyes how serious he was with his words.

『Hiiro is my benefactor. So.....I dedicate this life to serving you』

When he was reminded of his oath back then, he couldn’t ask back if wanted to do something else. This is what Camus wants, so he had nothing to say against it

However, as if Hiiro had hit on an idea, he moved back his glance to Camus.

"...I see, then want to help me with something?"

"....help?"

Camus inclined his neck as he asked back.

"There is something I would like to try."

They returned to the room where he trained with Ornoth a little while ago.

Muir and Mimiru were sowing the crops at the garden of the 《King's Tree》. And Tenn was helping the two as he enjoyed his first experience in agriculture.

Many crops cultivated in here are edible, and they are usually distributed to the people once harvested. The person in charge with this kind of work was Arnold's sister, Raive, which her products eventually grew popular as more demands came in.

And since Mimiru was fond of the garden, she invited the two, Muir and Tenn, to help with the work in the garden.

"Everyone, I brought some tea!"

Raive was taking a rest from work. So she prepared the snacks while Mimiru and the others continued her work.

Since the weather was very pleasant, they decided to eat at the garden. Tenn made a delighted expression as he ate the portion for him.

Since no one had opened a topic to talk about, Raive then smiled and asked the two,

"Nee, you both like Hiiro, right?"

“ “ Bu!? “ “

Muir and Mimiru almost vomited their tea as they coughed a couple of times.

"W-w-w-w-what are you asking all of a sudden!"

"I agree! You surprised us Raive-san!"

As their faces turned flushed red, Raive couldn't help laugh in amusement.

"Ahahaha! Your expression says it all you two! Ahahaha! Hm? Oh, it seems you noticed as well, huh?"

Raive noticed Tenn making the same face as her and judged he might have the same thought as she.

“Of course~ isn’t Hiiro the only one who hadn’t noticed?”

“Very true, that person is one difficult guy.”

“I agree, to begin with, why are the little missies yearning for that unsociable guy? No matter how you see it, he’s one troublesome human.”

In face of Tenn’s strange question, the two of them looked down with their flushed faces. And then, when the two of them began to fidget with their hands,

“ “ That’s because... “ “

The way they spoke in harmony was like they were two close sisters. Tenn and Raive who saw that mutually shrugged their shoulders as they made a wry smile.

“Then, let’s start with Muir, why?”

“Hau! M-me first!? Err....umm... well you see...auu”

It took a considerable amount of time from them to hear the details. Apparently Muir met Hiiro while he was traveling on his way to Gabranth, her yearning developed as she and Arnold began to join Hiiro in his travels.

“Well...Hiiro-san is really kind.... h-he’s so cool too... and above all, he cares deeply for his comrades..”

Every time Muir speaks, steam began to overflow from her. She would faint if they further asked more from her.

“I see~ how about Mimiru?”

“Uuu.....”

Although she was hesitant to speak, she took a deep breath and began her own side.

“Mimiru...was saved by Hiiro-sama before. But at that time, I barely know of him that much. H-however, when I saw his true appearance back then, it felt like my heart had been stolen by him.”

“Fumu~ love at first sight then?”

“Not exactly, it’s fate.”

“...err, no matter how you see that’s love at first sight...”

“It’s fate.”

“L-like I said...”

“It’s fate.”

“...I see, then I’m sure Mimiru and Hiiro are bound by the red string of fate!”

Tenn had already given up correcting her, so he continued with the flow.

“Besides, even Muir-chan also believes in it. Fate.”

“Ah, yes.”

“Both of us are tied with an inseparable connection with Hiiro-sama. At the very least, we believe so.”

“ “ Nee~?“ ”

Mimiru and Muir exchanged glances as they happily grabbed each other’s hand in agreement.

“Haa... I rest my case with this. Seriously, how many more women is that guy going to be satisfied with?”

Muir and Mimiru twitched as their mood changed when they heard Tenn’s mutter. And when they faced Tenn at same time with a smile,

“ “Tenn-san, we would like to hear the details regarding that matter, yes?” ”

“.....eh?”

Tenn could somehow feel a sense of intimidation even though they were smiling which made him gulped in nervousness and said,

“.....I-I understand....I’ll...talk”

Afterwards, Tenn had thought. That force at that time was stronger than the 『Spirit King』’s.

Chapter 253 - The Simple-minded Old Loli

“How is it? Feels good?”

“Un...amazing.”

“You should have been honest right from the start.”

“...Is it alright...to ask for more?”

“Of course. I want to know exactly how you felt it”

“Then...can I come... a little closer?”

“Hm? Even though this is fine?”

“I want to see Hiiro... more carefully..”

“...can’t be helped. Come here quick.”

“Un... I will.”

If one would listen upon their current conversation, one would think they were doing something suspicious, but they weren’t.

Hiiro and Camus returned to the training room for the time being, with Hiiro wanting to train on his 《Grand Red Aura》, and Camus lending his help to him.

Hiiro wanted to try something. So he personally used the 『Visual | 視』 character on Camus’ eyes.

It was the same character magic he once used to observe the flow of power inside Ornoth’s body through the demonstration he requested.

So while he was trying to mix his mana and life force, he asked Camus to oversee the whole process.

“So how was it? Did you get a good image regarding the process?”

“Hmm... it felt like two people were fighting?”

“Haa... why am I not surprised..”

Hiiro who was in a cross-legged position, sighed deeply and laid his head down on both of his hands as it is.

"Practically, doing it on the fingertips was easy, but it's considerably difficult when I do it on my abdomen."

"Really?"

"How about you try it?"

At Hiiro's encouragement, Camus also shut his eyes and concentrated doing the same thing...but,

"....it feels painful."

"That's natural. Although I'm not used to it, there are people who don't have the ability to forcibly mix their mana and life force, and even if they are able to do so, some experience overloading which causes pain as an after effect."

"..but isn't Hiiro amazing? You did it well on the fingertip."

Although Camus felt a little bitter of his incapability, he seems glad however that his Master was able to do it.

"Well, I only had to mix a little on the fingertips. However, when dealing with the whole body, it's an entirely different matter."

After unlocking the 《Four Word Chain》 that was used in writing the character 《Peerless | 天下無双》, the knowledge on how to use 《Red Energy | Shaki》 flowed to his mind, and the feeling still remained since then.

That's why he could easily do it on his fingertips. However, once he proceeded with his whole body, he struggled getting the knack of it.

"Isn't there...a trick to this?"

"A trick?... ah, you mean that abstract utter of the wolf?"

"Yes."

"Well, somehow I get the gist of it. You have to slowly draw out your mana and life force and let it freely combine together in a vortex. Then, gradually increase the rotational speed and let it condense into a small orb. Using that small orb, spread the power out all over your body..... if I could only do all of that though."

It was difficult to draw out both his mana and life force at the same time. It's

as if one would have to paint a complex picture using both of his hands. Even the slightest error in painting the color would ruin the entire process.

In other words, 《Grand Red Aura》 is born from the feat of completing the painting with the accurate timing of both hands.

"At first.... Hiiro's mana and life force were doing well...they were going round and round."

"....."

"Then... I think it was the life force....that started to distort."

"Distort?"

"Un... like something swerving"

Camus made both of his hands go around in circles. Then, the right hand stops moving and turned into a fist. Perhaps the right hand was representing the life force.

"It's only the life force... the mana was still turning around beautifully."

"....I see"

Hiiro's mastery on his magic is the proof of his precise control on his mana. However, he only tried controlling his life force after he knew the existence of 《Red Energy》

Since the feeling remained in him after successfully using 《Red Energy》 once, he was able to do it again on his fingertips. However, Hiiro was only a beginner right now in controlling his life force, so it was natural that his handle on it had a different effect compared to his mana.

(In other words, I'm like a right-handed kind of guy that was forced to use both hands skillfully)

However, learning to use the other hand, much less with efficiency, was a very hard task to do instantly.

"First of all, I have to get used in controlling my life force....."

Hiiro brooded on the matter at hand whether there was someone familiar proffiecient in controlling their life force. And as if he remembered a person like

that, he suddenly raised his face.

“Wait a minute... wasn’t 《Binding | 化裝術》 not considered a magic?”

“...?”

Camus cutely inclined his neck to the side in face of Hiiro’s sudden mutter.

“That’s it! If I’m not mistaken, 《Binding | 化裝術》 wasn’t a magic but a technique itself. I heard that it consumes life force and mana at the same time. Damn! Why haven’t I noticed it until now! Wasn’t the clue close to me all along! The hints were all over the place and yet I didn’t notice!”

“....Hiiro?”

“Let’s go Nitouryuu.”

“Eh?....Where?”. .

“Obviously to the person who knows a lot about 《Binding | 化裝術》.”

Hiiro went out of the room with Camus in high spirit.

“Hoh, and why did you come all this way to visit me?”

The one who spoke was Rarashik who was sitting on a chair with both of her hands inside the pockets of her white lab coat while her long ears were twitching back and forth.

Although it wasn’t obvious based on his small lolita figure, he had heard she was an old veteran fighter with an immeasurable fighting power. Moreover, she was the 『Gabranth』 renowned as the founder of the 《Binding》 skill.

Hiiro wanted to learn the processes involved in 《Binding》, and this person was the most suitable one to ask for, so that he could learn the trick in controlling his life force.

That’s because she can handle anyone’s 《Binding》 skill and is also the master of Arnold and Muir who were his former travel companions.

He judged that her control of her life force is very good, so he proceeded at once towards her household.

“Although I get the gist of what you are requesting.... But I don’t have any obligation to teach you, you know?”

Hiiro felt a little angry in face of that malicious grinning expression of hers. But he desperately suppressed it, as he calmed himself down.

"It's true that you don't have any obligation to teach me these kind of things..."

"If that's the case, then I don't..."

"But, for some strange reason, this [Xaous'] special 《Maker's Ale》 had found its way into my bag you know?"

"What did you sayyyyyyyyyyyyyy!?"

The cocky face she had awhile ago distorted into a surprised one as she stared at the bottle Hiiro had revealed.

"Furthermore, it seems someone had also put 《Sasami Chips》 along in my bag."

"Fuoooooooooooooo!?"

(TL Note: Sasami is a high quality chicken breast-meat.)

In face of her current expression, Hiiro could only think 'Caught ya!' as he made a snicker.

"G-give it to me! All of it! Especially that ale that I've wanted to drink for a long time!"

Although she approached while jumping on the said parcels, Hiiro raised it up above Rarashik's head.

"Wait a minute, did you think I would give these things just for free?"

"Ugh....Hiiro..."

Rarashik made a mortified expression as she fell down on the floor, head down and trembling.

(This is bad, did I take it too far?)

He thought that this method could let him talk with Rarashik on equal terms, but it seems it was too much stimulation for her. Maybe he should have behaved modestly when he's dealing with quick-tempered women...

Or so he thought...

"Nahahaha! *gulg gulg* puhaa~ you have should have done this right from the start! Now let me enjoy this first~"

.....when he offered the ale to her, she gave her approval so easily in teaching him on how to control the life force.

(Fu, I'm glad this person is so simple-minded...)

What Arnold said was true after all that he should give her what she wants first rather than ask first what he wants. So before he went to her household, he used 『Transfer』 character back to 【Xaous】 and procured the necessary items.

While watching the lolita drinking cup after cup from the ale, Hiiro unexpectedly hanged his head down as he sighed with a mix of relief and disgust.

Then, after Rarashik finished indulging with her treats, she said with a serious face,

"Now ask anything you want to know! My heart is very generous right now that I will answer any of your questions! Nahahaha!"

She had this triumphant look as Hiiro slightly glanced at her.

(I don't know how generous enough is that heart of hers, but as expected of that old man's master)

He anticipated that he would have a hard time handling this woman, but he didn't had to. Just like Arnold, she was an easy to handle old Loli.

Chapter 254 - The Second Princess Farah

Around the time Hiiro was being taught by Rarashik on how to control his life force, in the human country, there was one girl who woke up from her deep slumber.

“It seems our sleeping beauty has finally woke up.”

The girl was wide-eyed in surprise to the person who just spoke to her. Because that person was someone she hadn’t seen before. So it was natural that she would pull her body away from the said person.

“You don’t have to be frightened, young child. I’m just a beggar, no, a gentleman.”

“You are not very convincing!”

The girl inadvertently reacted to the words of the elderly person in her presence. And due to that, she recovered herself, and realized how embarrassing her response was.

“Young child, it’s best not to bring out a loud voice in here.”

Although the girl wanted to know why, she covered her mouth in response and tried to grasp her current situation. It seemed she was in a shed she’s not familiar with, and there were two simple beds on the spot, one of which was where the girl had been sleeping onto awhile ago.

Apparently, they were the only two people in here right now, the young girl and the gentle bald elderly who the girl found worth trusting.

“At any rate, you really slept a long time, huh? Do you still remember? A full three days had passed since you were saved from the castle you know?”

At the mention of the elder’s words, the girl finally recalled what had happened. And the person who took her out of the castle was...

“Are you perhaps...Judom’s comrade?”

“Young child, it’s useless to treat that bratty Judom normally. Rather, you should just call him a foolish muscle head.”

“F..foolish muscle head.”

The girl was having a cramp on her cheeks in response to the elder’s words. And then the door opened and the person they were talking about entered.

“Oh, you have woken up!”

Judom approached her with a big smile on his face. The girl couldn’t help but feel a little relieved in face of that expression, it felt like her anxiety and tension had been calmed down.

“Judom-sama...”

“I know you have a lot of questions in mind, but first, drink this.”

Judom handed a small cup containing the a transparent soup.

“This is...?”

“Just a soup I concocted by mixing medical herbs and fruits. And don’t worry, despite having medical herbs in there, it’s easy to drink it.”

The girl timidly nods in response to his remarks and began to confirm its taste. And true to his words, it wasn’t really bitter. It was probably thanks to the sweetness of the fruits mixed which made it easier to drink it.

“Even though you have finally woken up, food is still impossible for you, but that doesn’t mean we should let your nutrition deteriorate.”

Judom brought the chair at the corner of the shed and placed it near the young girl.

“Now where should I start...hmm, well for now, Farah, I’m really glad you made it this far.”

“Judom-sama...”

Yes, the girl’s name was Farah. Farah Van Strauss Arclaim, the second princess of 【Victorias】

She who failed in summoning the heroes from another world fell into a coma and have been deemed bedridden for the rest of her life.

And despite all of this, Judom said he was glad she was alive. To her who was incapable of practising summoning magic that led her into such a pitiful

situation.

Farah was still conscious while she had been bedridden for a long time. She could feel her frail body becoming thinner and she felt a sense of weakness inside her body.

Nevertheless, she was honestly happy that she could still wake up. It was very pleasing that there is a person truly glad from her awakening.

"Farah, first of all, a year has passed since the day you failed in summoning the heroes."

"....I see"

One year...for a normal person, it was short, but for her, a year was a very long time. Realizing again further of her situation, her expression darkened.

"Over the past year, the world had changed a lot. You can understand once you feel the atmosphere surrounding the royal castle."

Certainly, what he said was true. Although it was an embarrassing moment, Judom broke into her room and carried her limp body away outside.

The people who followed after them were all so pale as if they had been drained of their blood. The atmosphere of the castle also seemed strange, soldiers were collapsed everywhere, bleeding and rotting.

At first, she thought Judom had betrayed the country, but she felt the warmth from the hands holding her limp body, enough for her to think that she was being protected.

Although she doesn't know what had happened, she could guess that a crisis was occurring at the castle, no, the country. After that, she lost consciousness while being carried away.

"Did the 『Evila』 and 『Gabranth』 perhaps attacked our country?"

"...you could say that, but you can also say it isn't."

"...what do you mean?"

Judom explained to her about the Predecessor Demon Lord Avoros' hijack on 【Victorias'】 dominion. And also about the alliance of 『Evila』 and 『Gabranth』

Farah was listening to all this without blinking even a little bit as if she had hardened in her place.

"T-the story had become too much for me to catch up and understand."

"Haha, don't worry. It's alright to take it slowly. However, there are still more of this you have to follow."

"....eh?"

"...well, it's probably better when your physical condition have gotten better."

Although Judom said that while he was standing up,

"Judom-sama, please...let me hear it. All of them"

"Farah...it's a far more heavier story than you think they are, you know?

"I don't mind. I'm Farah Van Strauss Arclaim, the second princess of [Victorias]. I cannot afford to take my eyes off from a national affair. All the more if it's a serious matter..."

They were strong eyes. Strong eyes looking towards Judom. Although her cheeks were thin and loose, although there was a little hollow on her eyes, there was an evident light inside it, bright enough that speaks of life.

"Haha, you are still a princess at heart, stubborn and straightforward as I remember back then."

"...are you perhaps making fun of me?"

Although Farah said that with a pout,

"Ahahaha! It's a compliment! If it's the current you, then you can handle any talk I speak!"

"Hmph, Judom-sama is so mean."

She turned her face away while in her pouted expression.

"Sorry about that, anyway, prepare your heart as you listen."

"....I understand."

Judom summed up the current events from the first princess Lilith's successful summoning of the heroes to the current situation.

Summoning of heroes, alliance conference, war, and various human fighting... no, how King Rudolph went mad. And then Rudolph becoming an ugly monster which was perhaps under the supervision of Avoros right now.

Farah listened to the story while her eyes were closed. Judom did not exactly know what exactly caused it to happen, but Farah's body was shaking little by little and so were her lips.

After the talk was finished, a considerable amount of sweat was present on Farah's forehead. She had a face that had obviously received the impact of the story.

"...do you want to rest a little?"

"No, I'm alright...thank you for telling me all of this."

Seeing Fara's stiff expression, Judom gently applied her hands onto hers quietly.

"...you have become strong, Farah. In face of those stories, you held on. I know it's not that easy to organize your heart and mind."

".....yes."

"You can think of what you can do for the country from here on out. But always remember that you aren't alone. I'm here, and also my companions."

Judom expressed a smile to calm Farah, and in response, Farah returned the smile with hers too. Then, she remembered something.

"Ah, I seem to remember a beautiful woman you have brought along the time you saved me from the castle. "

As Farah asked so, Judom could only show a bitter smile in response.

"Oh, that woman, huh? I was about to tell you about it after you have woken up. Do you know her?"

"N-no, I don't remember being acquainted to such a person."

"That woman, although she saved us from the dead, she left with a few words after that."

"A few words?"

"Yeah, she said that she'll come back once you wake up. Do you really not know that woman?"

Farah was staring blankly in puzzlement as she honestly recalled nothing that made her acquainted to such a person. And then suddenly... the door opened, and one woman appeared there.

Judom stood quickly as he was alerted by another presence, but he was dumbfounded when he saw his opponent.

"I came just as I had told you."

The person that entered was the woman who once helped Judom escape from Avoros' undead army.

Chapter 255 - Marquis' Visit

At the time Judom was trying to overcome from being cornered by the dead while carrying Farah's body, a woman stepped in and helped them. That woman back then was the one on their doorsteps right now.

This beautiful woman possessed a dark blue hair tied in a ponytail, a figure one would make a woman jealous to have, and a beauty that could captivate any other man in the world.

After she saved Judom, he asked to return the gratitude to her, but the woman only said that she would meet them again once Farah had woken up, and left without saying another word.

But even if Farah would wake up one day, how would she know where and what place were they residing? Because even Judom didn't know where to go since that day.

But here she came, uninvited. Moreover, she came shortly after Farah woke up.

"First of all, I would like to greet you a well-deserved good morning, Princess Farah."

She approached Farah and lightly bowed in front of her.

"That way of speaking, you knew this girl was a royal princess?"

"I do. I also live in 【Victorias】 after all."

"In this country? I find it hard to believe."

It wouldn't be strange for a beauty like herself to be rumored amongst the people. For Judom who had lived in this country for a decade, such rumor should have reached his ears.

"You don't have to cautious about me. I saved you both because....I just felt like doing so."

He could only express a bitter smile with regards to her statement and inquired her further.

"We are really grateful for saving us back then. But who in the world are you?"

"I don't mind answering that question, but I must ask you not to get surprised by it, is that alright?"

At the mention of her words, Judom glanced at the elder besides Farah, and they both nodded.

"...you have my word"

The woman grabbed a book from the bag tied on her waist, and handed it to Judom.

"Isn't this....the 『Adventure of Tinkleweikl』?"

"Ah, I also know that book. My mother used to read me this story when I go to bed"

"Same here. I once read it when I was a child. It was a sad story, but I could somehow relate myself in the story."

"I agree. The author of the book wrote a very heartfelt story"

"Indeed."

(TL Note: I've used XCrossJ's translation of 『ティンクルヴァイクルの冒険』 in chapter 58)

While Judom and Farah were reminiscing their impressions about the book,

"Oh my~, if you praise it to such an extent, even I couldn't help but get embarrassed about it."

"Eh? What are you talking about? We're praising the author of this book you know?"

"I know, that's why I feel embarrassed about it. Because that book is my work after all."

.....eh?

"H-haaaaah!? W-what did you just say!?"

Judom was too surprised that he asked her in a loud voice while Fara and the

elder had hardened in their place as if they saw something out of their dreams.

However, the woman didn't stop smiling.

"Like I said. I'm the author of that book."

"No way! You're too young to be the author! I read that when I was a kid! A KID! We're talking about 30 years or more! And besides, old man, when have you first read this book?"

When Judom asked the elder, the person returned it with a nod.

"Let me see. It was probably more than 50 years ago."

"See! 50 years! No matter how I see it, you are at least....in your twenties..."

Then, Judom began to stare at the woman quietly.

"...don't tell me, you aren't a human?"

At the mention of those words, Farah made an expression as if she wanted to ask the same question. The life span of a 『Gabranth』 and 『Evila』 were certainly longer compared to that of a human being.

"But your physical outlook is exactly like a human.....are you a Half then?"

He couldn't find an ear or a tail of a 『Gabranth』 nor could he find a horn or traces of wings on her like that of an 『Evila』

That's why, he judged that the woman was a Half-human. If so, even if she was apparently a 『Humas』 appearance-wise, if the blood of another race flows into her veins, then that explains her long life.

However, the woman shook her head.

"No, I'm a genuine 『Humas』"

"Hah?"

"But..."

"Hm?"

"Let's just say I'm a human being with a slightly different disposition"

The smile she expressed was not the usual but was a fragile one mixed with sorrow and loneliness.

“...so what you mean to say is that you have a longer lifespan compared to us normal human beings? I see, then I won’t bother inquiring further”

Judom felt like he was about to step into something he shouldn’t know, so he decided not to pursue about the topic of her race.

“...you really are a kind man.”

The woman felt Judom’s anxiety and expressed a gentle smile towards him.

“But how do I say it. Even though you are my senior, your appearance doesn’t seem to be. Please pardon me for the honorifics.”

“Ufufu, sure. You have my permission.”

The woman beamed a delighted smile like how a usual girl would smile. It seems this woman carries something far complicated deep inside, but Judom thought not to inquire further than this.

“Let me properly introduce myself once again. My name is Marquis. Marquis Bluenote.”

“To think I would meet the well-known 《Faceless Author》 Marquis-dono... this long life of mine sure was worth it.”

Although the elder was praising the woman,

“P-please stop with that. I’m not a God. B-beside I’m not very fond of that nickname.”

“We can’t help it you know? No one exactly knows who or what Marquis looks like. I’ve heard that those books donated at the bookstores and libraries were reprinted again and distributed to the market.” (Judom)

“T-that’s because I do not write for money. I’m glad though that many people are reading my book...”

“But that’s also the reason why we only know the name of the author. Thus, 《Faceless Author》”(Judom)

“Uuu...”

As if to show her discontent towards that name, she dropped her shoulders in disappointment.

"Anyway, enough about. Still remember what you said to us back then?"

"...back then?"

"The time when you saved us."

"...ah."

"First, I understand that you just saved us on a whim. I won't bother about it for now. What I do want to know is how did you find this place and where have you heard that Farah had woken up?"

While Judom screwed up one of his eyes as he asked this on Marquis which the latter returned it with a smile.

"And if I tell you I was just passing by around here?"

"That's possible, I told my subordinates to let you in once you came."

"That seems to be. I wouldn't have gotten here easily if it wasn't"

Judom had informed his subordinates guarding the shed about her appearance, and instructed them to let her pass once she arrived.

"That's why you guys, go back to work."

When Judom said so, they could hear panicked footsteps leaving somewhere behind the door Marquis entered awhile ago.

"Those guys...good grief"

"Ufufu, that's natural. Because they were cautious about me and followed me until here."

Even though he could do something about it by himself if trouble came up, but Judom didn't say it.

"Well, they were probably curious as to why is a beautiful woman like yourself wants to get close to me?"

"Ara? That's quite an honor. For the companions of the 《Impact King》 to think of me in such a way."

Marquis made a glad-looking expression in face of his words.

"Anyway, enough about them, let's go back to what I..."

"You are wondering how I knew of this place, am I right? And also, how I knew that Princess Farah had woken up... that's because I foresaw where you would likely go. Does this suffice as an answer?"

"....Huh? What do you mean by that?"

Judom inclined his neck as if to show his lack of understanding regarding her spoken words.

"It's as she says Judom."

The elder opened his mouth while quietly watching Marquis.

"What do you mean, old man?"

"Haven't Maquis-dono said it awhile ago? She foresaw it."

"W-wait a minute...don't tell me.."

"It's as you think. This woman is a clairvoyant."

Chapter 256 - Marquis' Advice

“...a clairvoyant? That’s impossible..”

Judom raised both of his hands to his head in exaggeration as he shrugged his shoulders. However, he knew that it wasn’t a joke because the elder’s expression was serious.

“....hey old man, are you serious ?”

“Yes. It’s the only explanation that makes sense about this. If one could anticipate where would we be likely headed, then coming here easily isn’t an impossible feat.”

“If you say it like that, then I guess so, but a clairvoyant? Man, this is too much...”

“It’s certainly an amazing ability. There was another person a long time ago who had the same power, but after that person, no one else had it until this day.”

“Heh~ as expected of the wise elder.”

Judom who still couldn’t believe it faced Marquis again. She was still smiling fearlessly.

“...so it really was true, huh?”

“Yes, if it’s of any comfort, I only saw it just recently.”

“Just recently? What do you mean?”

“I was able to come here because I foresaw it happening a little before I came here. This is the result of my fortunetelling, it is not versatile at all.”

“Fortunetelling? You’re a fortune teller?”

“Yes, and it’s actually my main profession.”

“I thought you were a writer?”

“Like I said before, I wasn’t writing a book for fame or money. My main occupation is a fortune teller.”

"But...I haven't seen a fortune teller that looks like you..."

After his words, smoke appeared and wrapped her whole body. Judom stands ahead of Farah promptly. As the smoke gradually cleared up, an old woman wrapped in a black robe appeared on the inside.

And as Judom saw her appearance, he was convinced of her words and nodded.

"I see...so it was you. You used to foretell at the town district."

Judom recalled that she was the one fortunetelling at the corner of the road with this form. Smoke wrapped her body again, and she returned to her former beautiful appearance.

"Then, who's the real y..."

"For your information, this is my true appearance."

There was a sense of strictness when Judom heard her words, and he could only nod in agreement.

"I see. A fortune teller, huh? You found this place due to your divination, does that also include the princess' awakening?"

"Yes. It was a piece of cake."

Apparently, the woman in front of him was a fortune teller with a considerable mastery of it. Judom had met a lot of fortuneteller, but not with a high rate of success like hers.

And Marquis said as if it was a trivial matter. She really must have an amazing talent in fortunetelling.

"Well, thanks for telling us about yourself, but what are you going to do from now on?"

"What could you be implying with that?"

"I'm sure you know. The moment you saved us, you already have an idea what is happening within the country."

"....."

"You know who we are, and you came with your original appearance. What's

your aim?"

"Ara, did I say I was going to explain anything when I said I would come when the princess wakes up?"

"Stop with that attempt to cover up your words. I ain't foolish enough to not notice why you would want to get in touch with us right now, considering all the things happening in the country."

The Predecessor Demon Lord tried to kill Judom. And Farah who was also in here, would be likely targeted in the near future. Perhaps Marquis knew this already through her fortunetelling, what he did not know is why was she revealing her true existence right here and right now.

After the mention of his words, the silent Marquis quietly stared Judom. Then, she lightly sighed.

"...it is as you say. I certainly did came here to introduce myself and all, but I wasn't doing it to be thanked or appreciated. I came here to give you an advice."

"An advice you say?"

"Yes."

"...then what in the world is it?"

Not only Judom, but Farah and the elder all held their breath and quietly waited upon her words.

"....give up on this country."

"Give up on it!? What the heck are you trying to say! Do you know who took over the dominion of the country! It may sound unbelievable but it's the Predecessor Demon Lord!"

"Yes. I'm aware of it."

"If we leave him in control, a lot of people will surely suffer! I have to take some measures as soon as possible to ensure the safety of the people!"

Judom strongly thinks of the people, he couldn't leave them alone suffering. Especially now that he became the representative King of his old friend

Rudolph's former dominion. That's why he can't let that Demon Lord do as he pleases in this country.

"I understand how you feel. However, your opponent is the Predecessor Demon Lord which is why I'm advising you to give up."

"Are you forcing me to abandon my people?"

Anxiety was mixed in his voice as he glared at Marquis.

"B-being glared like that is kind of difficult you know..."

When Judom saw her gross-grained expression, he hurriedly losses his expression.

"S-sorry, I became too angry.."

"I-it's alright."

Marquis sighed in relief.

"But I can't abandon my country, I have a lot of important things in here."

"....that's impossible."

"Ku..."

"Judom, even if there are two of you in here who are an SSS Ranker, can you even defeat the Predecessor Demon Lord and his subordinates which their abilities are still unknown to us?"

"I know that.....Hm? Did you just say two SSS Ranker?"

"Yes I did."

"...you knew?"

"Naturally."

Farah who was watching the exchange of the two people, had not been able to keep up with the content of their recent conversation and was blankly looking at them in puzzlement.

"U-um..Judom-sama?"

"Hm? What's the matter Farah?"

“You’re an SSS Ranker right?”

“I was a former one, yes.”

“But Marquis-sama said there were two SSS Rankers present.... does that mean...”

Farah slowly glanced her direction to the elderly person.

“Ara? Have you perhaps not introduced yourselves yet?”

When Marquis said so, Judom and the elder expressed a wry smile.

“Judom-sama?”

“It’s as you think...how do I say it, despite what he looks like, this old man is also an SSS Ranker.”

“....eh?”

“Well, I’m also former one too though.”

Even though the old man said that, the fact that he admitted was no longer a mistake.

“Then, that means...”

“Let me introduce him Fara, this old man was a formerly Rank SSS adventurer just like me, although right now he’s just a poor doctor, he’s Tendok gramps”

“T-Tendok!? If I’m not mistaken, that name was known to be 『The Great Doctor』 who had traveled around the world treating numerous kinds of injuries and diseases!”

“Uwa~ it’s kind of embarrassing if say it like that. However, I’m just a simple doctor right now.”

“Tendok-sama...”

“I have learned from the old man how to make that soup awhile ago. And he’s also the one who nursed you for three whole days.”

“I-is that so. I apologize if I had troubled you a lot. And I also wish to express my gratitude for nursing me in these past few days.”

(TL Note: New name: テンドクってジイサン | Tendoku tte jiisan, I read it as

Tendok gramps. Feel free to suggest better names.)

Tendok smiled gently when Farah bowed politely towards him.

"No need to, you don't have to make a big deal out of it. In these past three days, seeing a young girl like yourself with such an unbecoming condition, it left my heart beating harshly... I thought I was going to die."

"A-are you alright!?"

"Hey old man, Farah's an honest child, she would really believe your joke if you leave it as it is you know?"

"It was a joke!?"

Tendok heartily laughed in response to her embarrassed expression. Farah however was pouting due to them teasing her, and Judom couldn't help laugh when he saw them.

"Ufufu, looks fun."

Marquis made a warm smile in face of three's merry appearances.

"This old man is really fond of teasing people. Anyway, returning back to the topic, I agree that we can't take back the country with just the two us, but I have some comrades who would help me do it."

"...like the people outside of this shed?"

"Yeah, I can even summon those people in the other provinces to gather a strong force of our own. Does it still not suffice with this?"

"Yes, it's insufficient."

This woman was really a frank one. Judom unexpectedly expressed a wry smile in response to her remark.

"Have you experienced fighting against Avoros before?"

"Direct confrontation? Yeah."

"I see."

"But the one I fought back then was his subordinate, Aquinas."

"Heh, that Aquinas, huh?"

"You know him?"

"Yes, just a little bit. He was a fine warrior among the 『Evila's』. You could also say he was a man with a good sense. But I believe you know this best since you've fought with him"

"I agree. He's a guy who fights fair. A guy who always fight head on."

"However, Avoros is different."

"....."

"He would use anything to accomplish his objectives. Taking hostages and setting up traps is something he would naturally do. He's sly and cruel....the worst opponent for you."

Judom felt that Marquis seemed to have a close connection with Avoros as he witnessed her bitter expression when she was speaking.

".....say Marquis, if it's alright with you, won't you fight with us?"

"Eh?"

"Although I say fight, I won't force you to actually fight anyone against your will. I understand that even you wanted to regain something from them, so I will respect how you would fight this war with your own terms, how about it?"

"Judom..."

"I do not know what burden you are actually carrying, but at least, a woman like you shouldn't be making such a sad expression."

"...you may regret it you know? I carry a tremendous bomb after all."

"Hey now, don't take me lightly. If a woman carries a bomb, wouldn't a man try and share the burden with her?"

"You really are.....ufufu, a foolish person."

In some way, Marquis had a refreshing expression on top of her usual. However, she refused his offered quietly.

"Thank you for the offer Judom. However, there are still things I have yet to do. Thanks to your words, I remembered them all again."

"...that's unfortunate."

"To tell you the truth, back then, I was about to abandon both of you."

The three people became silent as they listened to her story.

"...but I couldn't"

Marquis then stares at Farah's face. And Farah who doesn't understand the strange gesture of hers, inclined her neck in confusion.

"Because you were a princess....I could sympathize with you."

"Eh?"

The smile that Marquis expressed was very fragile, almost transient. When she turned her heels back,

"Say Judom, I have one more advice for you."

"What is it?"

"If you are planning to fight, I recommend a certain person."

"A certain person?"

"Yes. To be specific, a young boy."

"A young boy..."

"I'm sure that person would help you. If it's that boy he would..."

Marquis went straight out when she opened the door.

"W-wait a minute Marquis! What's the name of the young boy?"

When Judom asked in panic, Marquis turned her face sideways and said the boy's name.

Chapter 257 - Decision of the Two

At 【Xaous】 , in one of the rooms of the Demon Lord's castle, there were two girls facing each other, talking about the contents they heard lately inside the castle.

Those stories they heard were about the attack on 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】 and the takeover of 【Human Nation - Victorias】 by the Predecessor Demon Lord.

Especially the rumors regarding the individual who withered the national symbol of 【Pasion】 , 《The Tree of Beginning - Aragorn》 . Both of them had a difficult expression with regards to it.

The first person was Minamoto Shuri, one of the four heroes summoned to this world, 【Edea】 . She was a refined individual and was also known in her school as the Yamato Nadeshiko of their class.

(TL Note: Yamato Nadeshiko is a woman who displays the feminine virtues of the medieval Japan)

And her partner was also among the four heroes, Akamori Shinobu. She's an amiable girl who speaks in Kansai dialect whose character is just like a bundle of curiosity.

"Do you think it's true?"

Shinobu's usual expression couldn't be seen and was covered with a rather clouded one instead.

When they attacked 【Xaous】 , they realized their intentions were too naive as they directly experienced the true horrors of war.

At that time, they got separated with Taishi and Chika, but they surrendered themselves to the Demon Lord's castle by admitting their own errors.

They were resolved for the consequences of their deeds, but the Demon Lord Eveam did not take their lives. And instead, she held them imprisoned inside her castle.

That said, their imprisonment felt more like they were in a house arrest as they were guaranteed food, clothing and shelter while being tasked to work under someone's supervision.

"That Taishi-chi wud do something cruel like t'is..."

The reason why their facial expression were rather dark was due to Taishi's relation to this matter. Of course, they were both happy to be notified of his safety.

However, when they heard that Taishi was the one who killed the national symbol of 【Pasion】，《The Tree of Beginning - Aragorn》，their mood turned the other way around.

Shublarz was the one who particularly informed the two of them about Taishi's deed, however the two couldn't accept that fact all together as they knew that Taishi would never do such a thing.

So the two went to have a private discussion to uncover the missing link of such rumors.

"But when I asked about it if it was really Taichi-san...it seems to be him"

"Yeah, and based on the testimonies of the witnesses...among the two rebels who sneaked in, one was the hero."

"...yes."

Indeed, that was their best lead right now. All four of them were heroes, but both of them were aware that Taishi, the male hero was the one recognized by the people as the 'Hero'.

"T'is very strange... and even if it's true, why wud he do such a thing..."

"I don't understand it as well. But, at that time, there was no mention of a woman. Does that mean Chika-san wasn't on the enemies side?"

"Not sure. But, they said that the companion of Taishi-chi was a subordinate of the Predecessor Demon Lord..."

They heard that it was a beast human named Kokorou. And that he was a direct subordinate of the Predecessor Demon Lord.

“...I hope Chika-san is safe..”

“...same here.”

“But why is Taishi-san...not with Chika-san together? Were they perhaps separated? But even if that’s the case, why would they? I don’t see any reason doing so.”

As Shuri sadly spoke those words with a downcast expression, Shinobu placed a hand on her chin as she brooded regarding that thought.

“Reasons you ask?..... say Shuri-chi, have you heard about the character of the Predecessor Demon Lord?”

“Eh? Y-yes. He’s a very cruel and horrible person.”

“Are you sure that Chika-chi and Taishi-chi would never separate with each other?”

“Yes. They wouldn’t”

“What if...what if Taishi-chi is in a very difficult predicament right now?”

“...what do you mean?”

Shinobu raises a finger and matches her eyes with Shuri quietly.

“What if Taishi is being made to do things against his will?”

As the thought settled in Shuri’s mind, she opened her eyes wide in shock from the realization.

“S-so you are saying that....Chika-san is being held as a hostage?”

“It’s a possibility. Taishi-chi won’t destroy other people’s treasures without any reason.”

“Y-you have a point...but,”

In face of that strange response, Shinobu wondered and asked about it.

“Wat’s wrong?”

“I-it’s nothing...”

“....?”

Shuri held an appearance as if she was hesitating speaking about it. Shinobu who was inclining her neck in confusion, could only ask further.

“Tell me if you know something else about this.”

“...I understand. While it may be true that Chika-san was made a hostage, why would he go so far to do such a thing?”

Shinobu received the impact of her words and was jaw-dropped as she held a stiffened expression.

“.....err, if you ask me, I think it can’t be helped Shuri-chi. Because one of my friends is being held hostage after all.”

“Is that so?”

“W-what’s with that response?”

“Then why didn’t leave anything behind for us?”

“....eh?”

“Even if Chika is being held as a hostage or not, he should have left clues! He could at least left a paper written in Japanese or manage to find someone to help us cooperate with each other!”

Even Shinobu who was originally a talkative person, was overwhelmed by the intensity of Shuri’s fast-talking.

“S-Shuri-chi.... I don’t think he can do so much in his situation”

“According to the rumors I heard, Taishi was acting along for a while. I do think he could at least do something at that time!”

“Shuri-chi....are you perhaps angry at him?”

“Of course I am! I’m very angry at Taishi-san! He’s probably thinking it’s all his fault all of this happened that’s why he’s doing all these things by himself! Why won’t he try and rely on us!”

“.....Shuri-chi..”

“And because of his selfish actions, it resulted to the destruction of Gabranth’s treasure, and the takeover of the Humas’ capital, 【Victorias】! Doesn’t he realize he is making up more mistakes because of it!”

Shuri shut her eyes and strongly released a deep sigh after. Shinobu who was faced with Shuri's sentimental speech, could only stare at her, speechless.

"Why would he act alone...aren't we his comrades too..."

Soon after, stream of tears fell from Shuri's eyes. Shinobu who was at a loss for words, released a heavy sigh as she heard her friend's lamentations.

"...I agree, it's as you say Shuri-chi. Even if Taishi-chi is doing such things for the sake of Chika-chi, and also as one of the heroes, he is helping the Predecessor Demon Lord's world conquest... I don't agree with that too."

Shinobu made a bitter smile as she moved her legs towards the window.

"But, even we are in a similar position like Taishi-chi, we are under house arrest in this castle"

"But that's..."

"I know that, but we should do something, if we leave them as it is, those two would really fall into something they can't go back."

"Shinobu-san..."

When Shuri wiped the tears on her eyes, she turned her gaze to Shinobu. Shinobu's gaze remained at the window, looking outside where there's a clear sky shown.

"I believe we should stop Taishi-chi's actions by ourselves...but how can we do that while we are in house arrest?"

"...hmm.."

"Say Shuri-chi, I heard this from Shublarz-san awhile ago..."

"What was it?"

"We have free rights to do anything while on house arrest."

"I see."

"But she said we can do that if we lend them our assistance."

She heard from Shublarz that she couldn't bring herself to confine them any longer with such a situation brought up. So she told them if they were willing to

work for the country, they would be given rights to go out.

It's certainly true that they are heroes who had invaded this country, so it wasn't an exaggeration to say that they couldn't do much inside the castle.

But, they haven't hurt anyone from the 『Evila』. Thus, in order to solve their social standpoints, they were given free restrictions this way.

So if their intentions were aligned with the nation, and will therefore accept and lend their assistance for the country, or better, for the world, Eveam would allow them to go out.

"I have always been thinking what I could do when I heard about Taishi's rumors..."

"And?"

"Shuri-chi, I will enter the army."

"The army? But Shublarz-san didn't mention it had to be the army right?"

Then, Shinobu shakes her head and raised her index finger.

"That's too naive Shuri-chi. If you enter the army, there's a high probability you can enter the front where the battle occurs you know?"

"That's true"

"Shublarz said that the Predecessor Demon Lord was declaring war against the world. It's highly possible that this country would be involved in that fight."

"Yes."

"So if that war really occurs, if Taishi-chi is really on the Predecessor Demon Lord's side, surely he would appear too right?"

"Ah!?"

That was the entire point, if one was going to fight against the Predecessor Demon Lord who is trying to bring up the war, there was a high possibility that those who were in the army would likely face them first.

Then, it would become possible to encounter Taishi and wake the sense out of him. They would also find a way to save Chika who was probably held hostage as well.

Rather than moving covertly by the two of them, those who belong to an army of a big country will receive the latest national reports, and possibly news about Chika and Taishi, which they could save before the war breaks out.

"B-but will that even work?"

"I'm not really sure."

"Eeeh!?"

Shuri was amazed at Shinobu's instant denial of it.

"That's possible, 'cuz we might be sent out to the many places of the world, we might even die before we can do our objective."

"Ah..."

Shuri knew her words were not wrong as she was at a loss for words to respond.

"But, it's certainly better than moving with just the two of us. And besides..."

Shinobu smiles a little.

"I don't hate the people in here. How do I say it, it's more warm in here compared to [Victorias]"

"I agree with that. And the Present Demon Lord right now is a good person."

"Ahaha! I agree. Even though she's the leader of this nation, she comes in here and invites us to eat tea cakes with her. So different than a certain King we know of."

"And the way she talks was that of an ordinary girl."

"Yeah, that's why we shouldn't give up. We should fight and achieve our objective. We won't succumb to our defeat."

When Shinobu makes a strong expression with her eyes to Shuri, she also looked back similarly with the same vigor.

"Let's become stronger, Shuri-chi. In order to save those two!"

"Yes!"

The bonds of the two people have deepened further. However, they have not

known yet. That when they reunited with Taishi, they would taste the true desperation ruled by sadness and suffering....

Chapter 258 - What is Body Power?

"What is life force? In a technical point of view, it is the HP portion of the many 《Status》 we have, but to put it in simple words, it's body power."

Hiiro and Camus were quietly hearing the lecture of life force discussed by Rarashik personally.

How it all happened? The favor was all thanks to Hiiro's cunning bribery of using a branded ale in exchange for such a lecture.

And due to that, she seemed quite satisfied with the parcel she received as she continued to discuss in a very good mood.

"In the first place, it's no exaggeration to say that a person can have two powers inside them. The first one is will power, or what we also know as magical power. And the second one is life force, which is the body power we speak of right now."

While moving slowly from left to right, Rarashik moves her mouth as she raised an index finger.

"The formal term for life force is body power. So body power and will power, these are the 2 innate power residing in a person's body. Do you understand everything so far?"

Hiiro nodded quietly to her question.

"Good, now in order to control one's own body power, one has to first know what body power is all about."

".... do you know?"

"Yeah, knowledge is very important in all aspects of our lives. Hiiro, why don't you tell me your understanding regarding body power."

Because he had always used his magic when needed to be, he had trained in himself in mastering the control of his magical power, but for the first time, after being asked about body power, he noticed that he couldn't answer anything about it.

When leveling up, it was natural that body power and magical power would rise up similarly, but since he was only conscious of his magical power at that time, he had no prior knowledge in handling the body power he just recently knew.

Then Rarashik smirked as if she had foreseen his lack of knowledge on it.

"You don't have any idea, huh?"

"....."

"But I guess that's natural. The basics of a magician is improving their mastery on their magical power so they are ignorant regarding their own body power."

That was exactly what he did. As a matter of fact, he only used his recovery magic once he deemed necessary from the damage he received, he never considered his body power more than a necessity to it.

"However, body power and magical power are the same form of power you know? Am I too assume that you're developing a technique by learning the usage of body power?"

That was news to him. Certainly, magical power is more famous in this world as most residents could use it. That's why he improved his mastery on his magical power.

However, using that analogy, if one would forge their body power to the limit, one could turn it into a powerful weapon as someone proficient in magic could become a practitioner of it.

"I know because we beastmen couldn't use magic. That's why we struggled desperately to obtain arms that utilizes our body power which resulted to the 《Binding》 technique we have right now."

"....."

"However, this 《Binding》 technique can't be used by anyone other than beast men. That said, if one could control their body power, they could do a lot of other possible things. And I'm pretty sure those stubborn wizards didn't notice this one out."

It is certainly true that many of the people, majority from the 『Humas』 &

『Evila』, thinks that magical power is superior to any other methods of convenience. Hiiro had also thought similarly.

But as she said, if there is a technique that utilizes magical power, there must be a technique that utilizes body power too. Because both are two sides of the same coin.

“Well, in the case of body power, it is very difficult to handle compared to will power, that’s why those magic-obsessed people would definitely not notice it as they don’t seek it necessary, making them ignorant until this present time.”

So that means magic is convenient and easy to handle. Even if they did not know any techniques utilizing their body power as long as they have magic, it’s certainly true that it wouldn’t be necessary for an ordinary person.

“But you, on the other hand, noticed it. Not bad Hiiro! Nahaha!”

It felt like he was being looked down from above, but Hiiro remained silent and continued to listen to her. He didn’t want to ruin the mood right now.

“Now then, since the Hero of 『Evila』 had troubled to come here, let this genius me indulge you with some short lecture.”

She held an appearance as if she was humbly boasting of herself while puffing her chest with pride.

“First off, do you know where magical power can be extracted from?”

“Yeah, blood right?”

“Correct. Blood = Magical Power. Then, how about body power?”

“No idea.”

“Nahaha! What a straightforward fellow you are! Arnold desperately tried to answer it and said ‘brain tissue’! Nahaha!”

However, Hiiro was relieved deep inside. He was almost about to hesitate and answer brain tissue just like Arnold had done.

“How about you? Do you know the answer?”

Rarashik also asked Camus who was next to Hiiro.

Camus also shook his head softly.

"I see, then I'll tell you. For body power....it's everything."

".....ha?"

Everything...? What did she mean by that?

Although it was a simple word, it felt like it had leaped a lot of steps to arrive to that answer, hence his confusion.

"What do you mean by 'everything'?"

"Hm? Like I said, everything is everything. Your whole body, from your head to the tips of your feet."

"....so you mean to say that body power arises from every parts of the body?"

"Exactly. Your hair, your skin, your bones, and even your internal organs, are all sources of body power."

"I see."

Camus who was besides him also nodded in that moment.

"So the first thing you need to know: What is body power and where do you draw it from? Usually we unconsciously recognize this as physical strength, but understanding the true nature of it is our first step on this."

It was as she said, even when he discovered he had magic, Hiiro tried to learn the everything related to magical power. And due to his current knowledge, he could use it with precise control of it.

"Knowledge are principles. Knowledge is also power. With knowledge, there's no great difference between the unknown."

"I see. As expected of someone who had lived a long time..."

At that moment, something grazed Hiiro's left cheek. Apparently, it seems Rarashik threw a surgical knife.

"You do know those words are taboo for a woman, right?"

While she was expressing a smile, there was a dense aura flowing out from behind. It seems he stepped on a landmine, Hiiro immediately decided not to say words that would make her old.

"Well then, why don't I demonstrate it to you for the time being. So that you'll see what I can do by controlling my body power."

Due to that, she invited Hiiro to her basement. The place seemed to be the spot where she makes most of her research as it was a considerably vast area.

He had been in here before, it was the place where Muir took her apprenticeship exam.

"First of all, try controlling your magical power, and condense it to a small sphere."

When she instructed so, Hiiro began to concentrate as he raises his palms up. Then, pale blue magical power gathered at Hiiro's palm and condensed at a central point.

And then, it became a splendid blue globe.

"Nice, it became a perfect sphere with no sense of distortion. As expected of someone who has mastery over their magical power."

Rarashik admired his work as her rabbit ears went up and down.

"I've done this a lot of times due to training. This kind of task is a piece of cake."

"I see, then there's no problem."

"Hm?"

"Do you think it is possible to do the same with body power?"

That was an unexpected question. To be honest, he really doesn't know the correct answer to this. However, since he learned that body power is similar to magical power, he thought he could probably do the same thing as well.

"....probably?"

That's why he answered with positive confirmation....but Rarashik who was broadly smiling at him, was,

"Unfortunately, that's the wrong answeeee~r"

In face of that expression that was making fun of him, Hiiro couldn't help have a cramp on his cheeks from irritation.

"I certainly said that magical power is similar to body power. But it doesn't mean what it can do is necessarily the same, no?"

"I...if you say it like that, it makes sense."

"Isn't it? Now let me show what 'it' can do."

When she said so, Rarashik did an imposing stance by placing both her hand on the pockets of her coat. And when she took out her right hand, she raised up her index finger.

buuun....

The space around the index finger began to destroy very similarly to that of a flickering warm flame.

"Can you see it?"

"The distortion?"

"No. I mean body power."

"....not really, I can only sense the space flickering every now and then."

"Me too...."

Camus also answered similarly as he stared at it quietly. Hiiro felt that something was gathered on that space, but he couldn't see it even if he says it looked like a flickering pale light.

"Fumu, that's relieving. I was worried that you could see even this."

"What do you mean?"

"No need to mind it for now. First, look at this."

Rarashik gently touched the ground with her fingertip and pushed it as it is. The finger pushed through easily as if the ground had forgotten the concept of resistance.

It is without a doubt that the ground was hard. Of course, if he strucked it with his full power, Hiiro could also open a whole without problems, even with the use of his fingertip.

However, it requires a certain amount of power to execute that kind of

action. What Rarashik did however, was as if she submerged her finger under water.

While Hiiro and Camus were dumbfounded from amazement, Rarashik pulled out her finger and gazed back to Hiiro, eye to eye.

“That phenomenon just now was me wearing body power.”

“.....was it possible that your finger was strengthened using body power?”

“Nahaha! You’re smarter than Arnold. That’s right. Though I said this, there are only few who could condense this kind of amount to do such a thing. Even until now, this remained a mystery to me.”

Hiiro gulped as he looked at ground once again where a tiny hole was now present. It’s as if it was stabbed by a very sharp sword.

“You get it right? If you use body power, you can literally strengthen your physical capabilities. For example, if you concentrate your body power on your eyes, you would gain a perfect eyesight and so it would have similarly with your nose or ears. If you cover your whole body with body power, your defensive power would surely rise.”

At the mention of those words, he remembered the 《Grand Red Aura》. Whether it was capable of raising his defensive power or offensive power by wearing the 《Red Energy》, it was possible that body power played an important role in this.

No, it is in fact true that it was. Because the process is a mixture of body power and will power that created this 《Red Energy》, it’s natural to have that kind of effect. Although strength-wise, there is a big difference.

“And you said you couldn’t see it right?”

“Y-yeah.”

“That’s natural. In order to see it, you have focus your body power on your eyes.”

“Now it makes sense why you were troubled if I could see it or not.”

“You got it. But there are some people out there who can do this naturally.”

.....was she perhaps talking about Ornoth?

But he hadn't talked anything about body power. There's a big chance he doesn't even know that term. And yet, he could handle his body power without much training as if it was an innate talent of his.

(Tsk... this is why geniuses are so...)

Although he could accept the explanation, he couldn't help click his tongue regarding the unfair existences known as geniuses.

"However, there is a problem with this."

"A problem?"

"If you use your body power like this, your physical strength would be exhausted. To be exact, it's quite an inefficient technique."

"Hoh."

"That's why I created the 《Binding》 technique which utilizes not only body power but a combined effort of both will power and body power. With this method, I could suppress the consumption of it."

"Do you exactly know how much it consumes?"

"You can tell it once you've experienced it. Why don't you try it for yourself?"

"So I have to do it already, huh?"

"I have already given you the knowledge needed for it. Now you only have to make the best use of it."

Well, it was a better explanation than Ornoth's, so to be honest, it was life saving of her. But to try it out in a field test...

(Can't be helped. For the time being, I'll try doing it...)

Hiro closed his eyes in a natural posture and tried to pull out his body power from within him.

Chapter 259 - Hiiro's Roots

Seeing the countless stars shining in the night sky, a pleasant breeze blew the surroundings. The hustle and bustle regarding the migration of the departed symbolic tree of 【Beast Kingdom - Pasion】at daytime, had quieted down.

But sometimes, one could hear a mother lecturing her own child, or the tiny squeaking sounds of insects.

While hearing such sounds, Okamura Hiiro sat cross-legged at the top of the royal tree residence, 《Ouki》, as he looked at the starry sky above him.

“To think you were in such a place..”

Even though he recognized the owner of that bothersome voice, he didn’t glance at that person’s direction.

“What do you want old man?”

He said those words without turning around to Arnold who called out to him. The latter didn’t answer immediately as he thought he would be noticed anyways and continued towards him.

“It’s not a big deal really.”

“Then tell me quickly what you want.”

“Ugu...you haven’t changed that way of speaking as usual.”

Due to Hiiro’s straightforward remarks, Arnold had a cramp on his cheeks, but it soon returned with his usual expression and then sighed.

“Muir and Mimiru were looking for you, you know?”

“I see.”

“Well, those guys are glad of your visit in here..... even though I don’t want to accept it.”

It was obvious from his tone that he was jealous, but Hiiro didn’t mind about it. Because he knew since the time he met him that he was an idiotic doting parent-like figure.

“...say Hiiro.”

“....?”

“Why are you trying to get stronger?”

Hiiro wondered where that came from, when he looked into his eyes, he could see Arnold was serious, it didn't feel like question asked in a joking manner.

“During daytime, I heard you were having a special training with my Master. But why? You still want to get stronger even though you could do those things?”

He might be referring to the incident where he wiped out the water dolls.

“That's a foolish question. It's obvious there's only one reason for it.”

“Ha?”

“Because I don't want to die yet.”

“....can't you use your magic to prevent your death or something?”

“It's possible...probably. Haven't tried it.”

He probably meant... to use the 『Immortality | 不死』 character. However, Hiiro had decided not to use any characters related to life.

He's also scared about the 《Rebound》 of it, and even if he did use such a character, the emotion he's feeling right now might probably vanish.

“Then why not try it?”

“It's because I'm alive.”

“Hah?”

“It's because I'm still alive that I'm desperately trying to raise myself in order not to die. But if I become immortal, everything I've done until now will not matter anymore.”

“Hiiro...you...”

“I don't want toy with life so roughly. Especially my own life.”

“Why are you so particular on that part? Are the future fights going to be hard

if you aren't immortal? You seem quite fixated on that Predecessor Demon Lord too."

It is as he says, there is a possibility where he would face unfamiliar opponents, so the chances of him winning won't be higher if he's not immortal.

"You have a point, but if I really did become immortal, I would become an invincible existence."

"Then why won't you..."

"But, there's something wrong with it."

"Eh?"

"Something like foul play, or close to it, as if I'm betraying everything I had desperately tried to achieve until now."

".... really?"

"In my opinion at least. And besides....if I did such a thing, my deceased parents who protected me would definitely scold me about it."

"Heh, this is surprising. It's the first time you opened up a conversation like that. I was actually prepared for your 'It's not your business' speech, you know?"

If it's the usual Hiiro, he wouldn't speak such things more than necessary. But today, Arnold was quite surprised when he talked about his parents.

"I just felt like it today."

Hiiro shuts his eyes while looking up at the starry sky. And recalled a childhood memory, when he and his parents went on a trip.

When they entered a blind curve of a mountain trail, his parents died due to an accident caused by a doze driving of an incoming car... That was when Hiiro was still 6 years old.....

When Hiiro who had fallen into the bottom of a ravine, woke up, he noticed a warm feeling wrapping around his body.

Apparently, it seemed his dear mother had covered Hiiro with her body to protect him from the impact of the fall. Due to that favor, he was miraculously

uninjured.

However, his father who was supposed to be at the driver seat, was not there anymore. Still, Hiiro desperately called for the names of his mother and father.

At that time, his mother's body moved. However, he shivered when he saw his mother's body. It's possible they hit a tree branch when they fell. Because a branch had broken through the door and skewered her flank from the side. Hiiro could have been involved as well if he shifted a little bit from his position.

But despite this situation, his mother was still conscious. When Hiiro called out to his mother in tears, his mother opened her heavy eyelids as she heard his voice,

『I'm sorry....if I couldn't protect forever』

His mother was aware that she didn't have any time left. When she saw Hiiro safely uninjured, she expressed a smile and said such words.

It wasn't the usual one his mother would give as she cried in tears and embraced Hiiro. But he noticed that his mother was getting paler by the second, it felt like his heart was being crushed.

Nevertheless his mother still reassured Hiiro as she gently stroked her head with a gentle smile on her face.

『Listen Hiiro...from here on out....you may experience painful things....sad things.... And many more similar to these.... But always remember....never give up..... Desperately struggle to live....Hiiro』

His mother was still smiling even though she was crying in tears.

『The things you want to do....do it....don't endure it....do all the things you want to do....but Hiiro... I won't permit any plans going to heaven...alright?』

Hiiro was already drenched in tears. Although he was young, the bright Hiiro somewhat noticed that his mother's words felt like a goodbye.

To such a Hiiro...ton*....his mother gently poked his forehead with her index finger. And while smiling pleasantly,

『Hey now, if you're a man...you shouldn't cry that easily...Leave your grief...in this place....and go out there and live... I'm sure....happiness is waiting for you at

the end of it.....』

Once again, his mother hit his forehead,

『Although we may be apart for a little while....but always remember that...me and your father will be waiting for you...on the other side....That's why....Hiiro....live a straight life』

And then, his mother quietly shuts her eyes. No matter how much he cried and prayed to God, her eyelids never opened again.

After that, he didn't understand how long had passed by. He looked up at sky from the broken window. Although he felt a bit hateful, a starry sky was brilliantly spread around the night sky.

From then on, every time Hiiro sees the sky full of stars, he remembers his parents. And the words of his mother.

That day also, Hiiro learned the feeling of what it is to lose life at arm's reach, and even after he was rescued from that day, he had kept something from that incident all this time.

And that was....

『To live a straight life』

Because his mother had told him that, if he pushed straight from the path he was taking, surely he could face anything from that path. And his deceased parents wouldn't get angry at him as well.

"My mother...she's scary when you make her angry"

"Hm? Did you say something Hiiro?"

Hiiro shook his head and expressed a smile. It seems Arnold did not hear what Hiiro murmured.

"Say old man."

"A?"

"I will live a straight life."

".....?"

“I will not allow anyone hindering me. I will walk on the road I believe. If there are obstacles, I would strengthen myself and break towards it. Even if I don’t become immortal, I will find a way to get stronger still.”

“Ukiki! As expected of the contractor I recognized!”

Tenn suddenly showed from who knows where and gets on Hiiro’s shoulder.

“Yellow Monkey, how long were you here?”

“N~”

When he looked at the direction Tenn’s finger was pointing at, he saw three figures that were obviously not hidden.

“Blue Ribbons, Nitouryuu, Chibi.... What are you guys doing?”

At the mention of his words, all of them jerked in surprise and went out with their own apologetic appearances.

“Errr, uhm....since the stars are so beautiful tonight I thought we could spend time with you looking at it.”

“I-I agree! I would gladly enjoy star gazing with Hiiro-sama if you wish to...”

“I’m...always together with Hiiro”

In face of their desperate excuses, Hiiro sighed. But he wasn’t in a bad mood because of it. Because by looking at the stars this way, he could reconfirm his feelings, so he’s rather sorry for them.

“Well that’s that Hiiro, just give up. Since we are all here, why don’t you tell us some secret episode of yours? You know, about that kind of things? Like finding a crush or two at Evi— eh?”

It was reasonable that Arnold’s talk was interrupted mid way. Because he groaned from the two hands affixed to both of his shoulders with an unusual grip strength.

“Oji-san, why don’t we take for a walk?”

“And talk about regarding that, yes?”

Muir and Mimiru was giggling ‘ufufufu’ , as a Hannya appeared on their back.

(TL Note: Hannya is a mask used in theatrical Japan representing a jealous female demon)

"Wha— wait guys! Tha—that was just a joke!"

"Your character is very bad, Oji-san!"

"I concur! I won't permit such acts!"

"I'm sorrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrry!"

And so two little girls had began chasing the fleeing old man. Even Hiiro found it hard how it arrived to such a situation.

(That old man really never learns...)

Hiiro once again looked at the starry sky with his dark pair of eyes. It was really similar to the stars back then. At that time, he recalled what he swore to himself and thought about it quietly.

(Mother, Father, I will live to the utmost from now on)

Chapter 260 - Sacrifice

【Shanjuumon Cave】，this was the most dangerous area in Evila where Liliyn and his company brought Hiiro for the sake of a certain dream of hers.

Somewhere within this cave is where the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》 resides, which due to it turned this cave into a terrifying dungeon.

It's terrain changes like a labyrinth every time one intrudes. Also, numerous atrocious demons inhabits this said place. Thus, no one had dared to come in this place.

That said, Cruzer Jio, a beastman, had lived in this strange place. He was the father of Winkaa Jio whom Hiiro had once traveled with in their travels, and he's also a uniquely talented blacksmith.

However, because of his rare mastery in smithing, several countries and thieves aimed at obtaining him which resulted into his family being killed by one of the very weapons he had created. Due to that, he decided to not make any weapons that could kill people again and ended up secluding himself in this hellish cave.

Liliyn asked Hiiro's cooperation for persuading Cruzer into joining their cause, for the dream【Paradise】that she had persistently want to establish. The result went well as he decided to go out of this cave again.

However, he was not ready for his departure yet, and once again returned to his residence in order to sort out his personal belongings for awhile....

“...hm?”

His pointy ears sensed a subtle sign of presence. Incidentally, his figure was not his usual beast man appearance, but of an 『Evila』-like one. His identity was not exposed because of Hiiro's word magic, 『Change | 変化』

(This presence....this is not Liliyn's)

Immediately noticing the presence that had entered 【Shanjuumon Cave】，he judged that he didn't recognize this intruder.

(Then who in the world is this intruder?)

There were only 2 significant things the he derived if one's aim is this place. First was the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》 raised awhile ago. And second was him, Cruzer himself.

Even to this present age, there are many who still desires for his blacksmithing. If his existence was to be revealed, the country would move to obtain him. Because the weapons he make was superior in all aspects compared to the norm.

So there's a small chance that he was the aim of this unknown intruder. That's why in order to ascertain the foreigner's true aim, he decided to hide his presence and check it out.

The place he arrived had many holes that serves as passages to the other rooms. The presence he felt must be in here. Cruzer held his breath and approached the place.

What he saw astonished him.

(That person is ...!?)

There was only one person there. Or to be exact, rather than a person, a boy was there. It was handsome youth who was fearlessly expressing a smile while waving with his golden hair.

At that moment, Cruzer remembered who that boy was.

(....Predecessor Demon Lord Avoros...)

Indeed, if Cruzer's memory was not mistaken, that person over there is Avoros Gran Early Evening. He was a heartless Demon Lord who had once governed Evila.

(Why is he in this place...)

However, his doubt was answered immediately. Because he recalled about the duo who proclaimed themselves members from a group called《Matar Deus》

Their purpose was to obtain the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》. However, they were not able to accomplish their objective. As evidence of the

illusions still covering this dungeon.

So the Demon Lord came by himself this time. But how will he be able to obtain the 《Core》....

Cruzer had once stepped in the place where the 《Core》 was located, and he could tell that layers of protection surrounding it were impenetrable.

And yet, Avoros came here, alone. This level-headed Predecessor Demon Lord famed for his matchless cruelty should know that his chances of obtaining it is very low.

(What are you planning...?)

Then, he became wide-eyed in amazement when he noticed a strange aura being emitted from him. It was an ominous sheathed sword releasing a very dark aura.

(Impossible...why do you have that sword? I....I should have sealed 《Sacrifice》 long ago!)

He was sweating from fear as he couldn't believe what was happening in front of him. Avoros entered one of the holes with a fearless smile on his face.

(That passage... I knew it, his aim was the 《Core》!)

Due to Cruzer's personal talent in scouting, he could freely move without hesitation in this place. He even arrived at the place where the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》 exists.

So Cruzer was sure that Avoros was definitely heading towards where the 《Core》 is located.

(To think he would use that sword!..... I have to get out of here!)

Cruzer immediately ran back to his residence at full speed and get his things. He must flee from this place as soon as possible...that was his only thoughts as he ran forward.

Avoros hadn't noticed Cruzer's presence as he moved his legs quietly to the place he was headed to.

In the middle of his walk, a vast terrain impossible for a cave to posses was

spread out before him.

"Ahaha, no matter how I come to this place, this outrageous power never cease to amaze me."

In front of his presence was a horizon full of floating pale beads that seems to be the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》..... Numbering to an amount impossible to count.

"With this kind of amount, it's really impossible to find it if you look at it one by one."

Avoros nods many times in rapt admiration of it.

"Although I heard you hid such a tree in a forest, I never expected for you to make the forest as well. I'm really filled with awe you know?..... To this power that's still alive even though you're dead. This is...seriously incredible"

Avoros looked around his surrounding. Countless 《Core》's was spread out infinitely inside the cave. However, among them was the real one. All the other were illusions to hide the body of the real 《Core》.

"Yup. It really is impossible to discern the real thing with my own. If possible I don't want to use this thing."

Avoros makes a troubled appearance with his eyebrows as he touched the sheathe from his waist. Both the handle and the sheath were pitch black, but as soon as he slowly took it out, a darkish red aura began to leak from it.

"Now, awaken."

Pishi.....

The chains cracked. And slowly, the blade was exposed from within. However, every time he pulled it out, it made an unpleasant glass-scraping sound. And with a final pull, *bakin, the chains broke as the true appearance of it emerged.

"Gegiyagiyagiyagiyagiyagiyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

Everyone who saw it would surely find it unbelievable. Well, there's the scream too as well. Because the blade was bloody red and an eyeball was embedded at the sword's base. And there's that ear-splitting scream too.

“I’ve finally been released! Gegiyagiyagiyaaa!”

“Quiet down please. This an order from your benefactor.”

The eyeball moves and stared at Avoros.

“Hou, and who the hell are you? You’re not that person. But you’re not also an ordinary one if you can release me like that.”

“That person? I don’t know who you might be referring to. But as your new master, let’s get along well, alright?”

“Gegiyagiyagiyaa! Alright, I’ll accept you. I’m in very good mood right now. If you, my new master will let me enjoy to my heart’s content, I’ll lend you my strength.”

“Oh you will, you see, I’m waging a war. I’m sure you’ll definitely get a lot of that favorite blood you love.”

“Gegiyagiyagiyaa! Now that’s a treat!”

“Let’s work immediately. 《Sacrifice》, I want you to grant my wish.”

Several thin tubes emerged from the sword and then sticks into the body of Avoros.

“Gu!”

As expected of the pain, Avoros frowned.

“Then I’ll gratefully receive it! Your life for starters!”

“Sure, take as much as you want. It’s the compensation for my wish.”

Something fills the tubes from Avoros body as it flowed through the sword. Then, the shape of the sword gradually changed.

The appearance was not of a sword anymore, it was more like a deformed fang of a beast. And Avoros threw it out to the sky.

The fang turned jet-black as it grew bigger.

“Now, devour everything...《Sacrifice》”

Chapter 261 - The Core of the Founder Demon Lord, Deprived

It appears I was mistaken about Kainabi being the water user.

Because of that, I made a short glossary of the known subordinates of Avoros!

Kainabi - A fearless Loli who uses plants to fight. One of the people who stole the light of Naous.

Kokurou - Foul-mouthed Beastman Assassin. Traitor of Pasion. Was the one who raided the royal household, Ouki.

Hiromi - The Scarface villain who transformed Camus' father into a hideous scorpion

Kirz - Oji-san character that possesses 'Hawk Eyes'. Caused the Water Dolls Incident.

Rankonis - Kirz's aide? Tsundere?

Iraora - Traitor of Evila. The one who murdered Geyald of Cruel, Rank 6. The Magma Giant.

Abyss - a Humanoid Darkness Spirit like Silva. An emotionless shota.

Isuka - Water-user subordinate of Avoros.

Val Kiria Series - the banned dolls created by the Founder Demon Lord

Bijohnny - Aka Beautiful Johnny. One of the people who stole the light of Naous. Gay shit. Funny though.

Cruzer ran. Inside the long, long cavern, he who had an uneasy expression, was desperately moving his legs towards the familiar path out of this place.

Then, his eyebrows twitched as if he perceived something.

"It has already begun!?"

That shout wasn't directed to anyone. It was more like a grumble that came unconsciously from him.

When a light from his direction began to reveal in front of him, he increased his speed. Suddenly, the cave began to shake intensely. He instinctively stopped his legs to prevent from tripping as he observed the loud creaking of the ceiling, which then collapsed in that moment.

“I will not let you!”

Cruzer partly closed his eyes. And then carefully held the handle of the katana at his waist. In that instant, the fragments of the falling ceiling were shredded in a flash.

There was no appearance of him drawing either. But if one paid attention to it, one could hear the sound of the katana clicking back to its sheathe.

“There doesn’t seem to be any more of it...”

Looking at the collapsed ceiling from above, he felt glad he stopped because he would have been buried if he didn’t. Immediately after, he stepped on the ground to the point of resisting the tremor and headed towards the exit.

It had grown completely dark as a big moon was glowing in the sky.

At the moment Cruzer escaped from 【Shanjuumon Cave】, the cave collapsed with a resounding roar as if a meteorite crashed on it.

For Cruzer, this was no doubt the shelter that he had been using for several years, it held great importance to him.

Because of its abrupt collapse, he felt deep sadness from within. If anyone would see his expression, they would also say the same thing.

But his expression immediately tightened as he thought of the criminal offender who thrashed his beloved place he had once called home.

(So Avoros really did use it after all...)

His thoughts focused on the sword Avoros brought. It made him want to puke when he imagined Avoros holding that sinister sword wrapped in a pitch-black aura.

(Although I have a lot of questions about it, I must relay this information to Liliyn and the others as soon as possible)

If he stayed a bit longer, he would definitely encounter Avoros, so he decided to flee from the place while being cautious of his surroundings.

There are several entrances of 【Shanjuumon Cave】. Regardless of where you enter from, the intruder would be immediately misled by the power of the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》, but despite all of this, faint footsteps could be heard from one of the many entrances that should have been collapsed.

It wasn't the one Cruzer escaped from. Because a person garbed in black clothing was stationed in this place. It was as if she was waiting for someone.

When she heard the footsteps, that person quietly turned her attention towards the entrance. The sound gradually became louder and stopped right after a while.

With a loud, *dogoo!, the rocks that was blocking the entranceway was blown away. From the inside came someone holding a small light.

"Hey Isuka, did I make you wait long?"

TL Note: New name! イシュカ | Ishuka, read it as Isuka

The one who came out and said those words, was the Predecessor Demon Lord. He had his fearless smile as usual, but he knelt down on the ground the next moment.

If one would look at his body carefully, it was worn out and blood-stained. If it was ordinary man, they wouldn't be able to come here walking like this.

The person who was called Isuka panicked and approached him immediately. She gently placed a hand on his shoulder so that she could tend Avoros' battered body.

".....you overdid yourself"

It sounded as if it came out from the mouth of the mask as a muffled voice was heard from it.

"Ahaha.... The moment I released this guy. I was prepared for the consequences you know?"

Avoros points at the sword on his left hand with a wry smile on his face. The words released from his small mouth was not his usual frivolous talk, but a

ragged breath that was enduring the pain.

And then, he released a heavy sigh as he sat down on the ground. However, it was obvious that he wouldn't let go of the small light held in his right hand.

"This is..?"

"It's as you can see, the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》"

"Is it so valuable to the point that Milord would endure such an appearance?"

"To tell you the truth, I really didn't want to use 《Sacrifice》. Because, as you can see, I'm afraid that my body would be eaten...."

"Milord...."

"Nevertheless, this thing here is necessary by all means. In order for my wish to come true."

Avoros stared at the little fire that was shining a pale blue light with eyes filled with joy.

"However, why was I left in this place? Were you worried that I would be injured if I was together with you?"

"Yeah, I don't want you to get involved in that place. For the current me, I can hardly control this thing. That's why I had you stand guard in here."

"....is that so."

When Isuka said so, Avoros slowly lowered his gaze to the ground. While he was breathing heavily, he wiped the sweat from his forehead with his hand, which Isuka noticed, trembling.

"And besides...your role is important you know? A talented personnel....who can deliver it....to the castle..."

".....?"

Suddenly, the 《Core》 disappeared from his grasp as it was absorbed by Avoros' sword, and the next moment, Avoros dropped his head with his eyes closed. It's as if he stopped moving like a toy due to its broken switch.

"Milord!?"

Isuka gently supported his small body. And the moment she tried to grab the sword that had fallen to the ground,

“Hey you, don’t go touching me with your hands!”

Isuka instinctively retracts her hands back when she heard the creepy angry voice coming from the sword.

“HAH? What’s with that kid? Playing dead already? Gegiyagiyagiya!”

“...I see, so you’re 《Sacrifice》’s inner consciousness”

“AHNGA? Don’t call my name as if we’re close!”

“.... Milord is still alive. Since you are Milord’s sword. I want you to come with him.”

“Hohou, if he’s really alive, fine. Besides, I was able to satisfy my hunger, this is my gratitude to him. I’ll stay with him a bit longer. Gegiyagiyagiya!”

Isuka while quietly taking caution, approached the sword and picked it up.

“I’m surprised though, for a kid like that could use me to such extent...”

“.....hm?”

“But, he still has a far way to go. Gegiyagiyagiya!”

Without nodding, while Isuka was carrying the two bodies, she said,

“.....Aquarius Gate”

At the mention of those words, a large pool of water spreaded out from Isuka’s feet.

“Impressive, water-teleportation magic, huh? It’s been a long time since I saw that.”

Isuka did not respond to 《Sacrifice》’s admiration to her feat, and steadily sunk to the water while holding the two of them.

The next day, the soldiers of 【Evila - Xaous】 patrolling the area confirmed the collapse of 【Shanjuumon Cave】, dread and shock ran through Eveam and Aquinas who heard the report about it.

Cruzer thought it would cause problems if he intruded late at night in the

castle, so once the morning of the next day came, he immediately went to where Liliyn was.

Eveam was notified beforehand of Cruzer's stay, so after the soldiers confirmed he was the real Cruzer, they guided him inside the castle.

Liliyn also knew of his visit, so when she thought he had finally arrived, she greeted him, but when she saw his pale expression, she understood that something had happened and began to inquire the circumstances after.

"What did you say!? The 《Core》 was stolen!?"

Liliyn raised a cry that resonated throughout the room Eveam had given them to stay.

"That's impossible! Even if it's the likes of the Predecessor Demon Lord, it should still be impossible for him to obtain it!"

The 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 has the power of deceiving one's own senses. Even if the personage themselves were the Demon Lords, Liliyn believes that they would be unable to surpass this kind of power. That's how Liliyn sees that 'person' differently compared to the next generations, anything related to 'that' person is not that easy to obtain.

"Yes, I know that thing isn't easily obtainable."

"If that's the case!"

"However, what if you use a complex method in obtaining it?"

"....complex method? What do you mean?"

Liliyn who somewhat regained her composure from Cruzer's words, sharply narrowed her eyes towards the said person.

"The predecessor Demon Lord....used a sword called 《Sacrifice》"

With a heavy atmosphere as he said those words, Silva, Nikki, Mikazuki, Shamoe and even Liliyn inclined their necks from the foreign term they just heard.

"....what's this 《Sacrifice》 you speak of?"

"It's a sword.... I invented it...no, it was more like a creation born from an

accident, but when I witnessed its birth, I decided to seal that sword due to the wicked existence that was born inside it.”

“...if you say it like that, what kind of monstrosity was that sword then?”

While Cruzer was composing the words for his following answer, a knock came from the door of the room.

“I apologize for disturbing you, but I would like to consult with Liliyn-dono about something.”

The one who entered was Eveam, the master of this Demon Lord castle. Her face also had a difficult expression as if an unexpected matter came up.

“....is this about 【Shanjuumon】?”

“....you knew already?”

The information about its collapse had just reached her this morning. But even so, Eveam felt surprised that Liliyn is already aware of this.

“Yeah, this guy Cruzer who was a former resident in there, told me about it.”

“F-former resident!?”

Since she didn’t know Cruzer’s previous homage, Eveam made a surprised expression.

“C-Cruzer-dono do you know what happ...ah, pardon me, Liliyn-dono, could you contact Hiiro, he might be able to discover something about this. Also, could Cruzer-dono tell us everything you know about the time when 【Shanjuumon Cave】collapsed?”

Apparently, no one knows if the 【Shanjuumon Cave】 really just collapsed or it was caused by something else entirely. That’s why, she visited Liliyn who knows a method to call Hiiro back so that he can help with investigation of this incident.

However, if there was a party concerned like Cruzer in this incident, she would like to hear his side as well. Liliyn also wanted to know the method how the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 was deprived, so she urged Cruzer at once.

However, before Liliyn proceeds with that topic, there was something else she had to confirm.

“Oi Maou, do you know what’s enshrined in that place?”

“....Of course I do, I’m the Demon Lord of this kingdom after all.”

“Then there’s no problem.”

At the mention of those words, she sighed in relief for being pardoned on not explaining this matter.

“Maou, I will ask something about this later, but do you accept?”

What she wanted to ask was ‘Why was the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 kept in that place?’

“U-uhm, I don’t mind answering your question. B-but I don’t know who might hear upon this, so I would like to encourage everyone to continue this discussion at the conference room?”

At the mention of that proposal, Liliyn thought it was a pain to transfer location, but she decided to respond to her invitation as she stood up from her place. With a condition, of course, of having Silva permitted to come as well.

Since Nikki, Mikazuki and Shamoe were making expression as if they don’t follow, Liliyn decided to take Silva who had an understanding of the matter at hand.

Chapter 262 - Cruzer's Confession

Inside the conference room where the Demon Lord Eveam and the Cruel Brigade officers gather, there is a long table in the center of the room used to do their meeting.

Among the personnels present were Eveam, Aquinas, Marione, and then the guests, Liliyn, Silva, and Cruzer.

In a position where one could see everyone, there is a dedicated chair for the Demon Lord, and of course, Eveam was on that seat. Aquinas and Marione sat besides her, while Liliyn and the others occupied the vacant seats left.

"Well then, could Cruzer-dono tell us everything you know that happened in [Shanjuumon Cave]?"

When Eveam urged Cruzer to speak, he talks quietly as he held hand on his chins.

"Understood. Then first would be 'who caused the collapse of the said place'..."

When he mentioned it was the Predecessor Demon Lord, even though Liliyn and the other were surprised by this, Eveam and her company had hardly any surprise in their expressions. Apparently they seem to have a rough idea of who caused such a deed.

"As expected...so it was Avoros..."

Eveam muttered those words with a bitter expression. As Cruzer heard those words, he was convinced that they had anticipated something like this.

"However, how was he able to do that..."

"I'm also anxious about that, Cruzer. A while ago, you were talking about a sword he possessed, what was that sword anyway?"

Liliyn recalled sword he was talking about before and inquired it again.

"A while ago, I talked about a sword he had. It's name was 《Sacrifice》"

As expected, hardly anyone reacted to the mention of that name. However, he noticed Liliyn's movement. It was due to the usually expressionless Aquinas who raised his eyebrow slightly.

"Sacri...fice? It's a name I haven't heard of, but what is that sword?"

Marione asked back as he rubbed his prided moustache.

"....《Cursed Sword - Sacrifice》. It's dangerous sword that should have been sealed in the past."

"... sealed it? Please wait a minute. The way you said it sounded like you were the one who sealed, was I mistaken?"

Eveam's doubt was well founded, and her two subordinates also looked at Cruzer with suspicious gazes.

"No. You are not mistaken. 《Sacrifice》 was a sword that I had sealed with this two hands of mine."

"I-I see...but why does Avoros have that 《Cursed Sword》?"

In face of Eveam's question, Cruzer answered with a slightly downcasted expression.

"That's what I don't understand. I do not know how he knew the location of the sealed sword and also the method of releasing it. But I'm definitely sure that he had 《Sacrifice》 with him."

".....may I know where it was sealed?"

"I sealed it at the bottom of 【Belial Sea】"

At the mention of that name, almost everyone became speechless.

"【Belial Sea】....it's the sea on the far north from here, where there's a nonstop occurrence of whirlpools and violent oceanic current. And most of the monsters living in that area are rated Rank SSS....are you telling me that sword is in there?"

It was Marione who inquired further while explaining so. Although Cruzer nodded in affirmation,

"Preposterous! It's certainly not a place for any half-hearted person to step

foot into, but for someone like you to enter the bottom of that sea? There's a limit to one's own foolishness you know?"

When Marione let out an amazed sigh following his words, it wasn't Cruzer but Liliyn who made a displeased expression with regards to those offending words. However, Marione didn't stop there.

"Furthermore, it's already suspicious that you said to be a resident of that place. 【Shanjuumon Cave】 is not a place that can be habituated by any average person. From the way I see it, you're just a lying 『Imp Race』 in my eyes."

"Marione, restrain your words."

"But Your Majesty..."

Marione was speechless to Eveam's unreserved words, but he didn't withdraw his words and only shrugged his shoulders without care.

Liliyn who was at limits of her irritation due to his rude attitude, tried to open her mouth and bash him with words of her own but,

"Marione, as a fellow comrade, let me say that you haven't seen the true essence of this person yet."

It was Aquinas who had not spoken until now.

"W-what are you talking about?"

"You don't know whether that person is telling a lie or not, right?"

"Mu..."

Marione broke away from his gaze when the two of them exchanged glances with each other.

"I can understand that you're frustrated about the 『Core』 being deprived. However, it is also true that we need as much information as we can on this. Have a little composure at least."

"As if I could leisurely do that while listening on this conversation! The 『Core』 had been stolen by that Predecessor Demon Lord you know! If we don't retrieve it as soon as possible, he will surely cause a great disaster in this country!"

Marione who was full of frustration, *bann, pounded the table with such intensity. However, Aquinas wasn't unfazed by the direct reception of his anger, and said,

"This person is not telling a lie. If I had to say something about it, his appearance is the strange one."

The long slits in Aquinas' eyes narrowed when it turned to Cruzer. Even Eveam and Marione who bit his words, raised their eyebrows in wonder, but Liliyn clicked her tongue and murmured the words 'damn it'.

"What do you mean by that Aquinas? About his appearance being strange?..... Liliyn-dono?"

Eveam faced Liliyn who had substantial knowledge on Cruzer's circumstances. Cruzer seemed to have been confused too and stared at Liliyn.

(....haa, those eyes are really a pain in the ass)

Liliyn seems to have been dismayed by the outcome and shifted her gaze to Aquinas' crimson eyes with clear irritation.

"Please be relieved. Whoever that person may be, he would remain as a guest in this place. I do not wish to relinquish his stay in here."

"....."

The two did not avert their glance and mutually stared at each other.

"...I promise you that."

"Hou, how generous of you to say that, are you sure you can thoughtlessly make such a promise like that? You're not the Demon Lord you know?"

Liliyn's response was rather extremely natural. But it was Eveam, not Aquinas, who responded next to the provoking words of Liliyn.

"Liliyn-dono, it is as what Aquinas say, I will also promise you of that."

".....what will you do if you break your word?"

"That will absolutely never happen. I assure you of that as the Leader of this country"

".....on one condition. Even if his identity is revealed, you must swear that you

will not disclose his identity to anyone else in this place.”

“.....you have my word.”

At the mention of such words, Liliyn leaked a sigh, and gave Cruzer a nod when she faced him. Cruzer also pondered for a bit, before he returned his positive consent. Although he felt uneasy, he seems to have reached an understanding based from Liliyn’s worries and Eveam’s personality.

And so, Cruzer quietly began to speak for himself.

“To tell you the truth...”

Cruzer talked about his identity of not being an 『Evila』 but a 『Gabranth』. Then, Marione gave a more stern look, while Eveam opened her mouth slightly, but Cruzer continued to explain as it is.

“I-Impossible...are you saying you are that ‘Cruzer Jio’?”

Marione spoke his name with an unbelievable look in his face. Eveam however had a look that she couldn’t relate to it. It seems she had not heard of a person known as Cruzer Jio.

“Cruzer...when I heard that name I thought it was just a coincidence, but to think you were as I had guessed.”

Aquinas seemed to have predicted that Cruzer was a master blacksmith based on his wisdom of the past and the true nature he saw with his eyes.

“It was Hiiro-san who had changed my outer appearance, so that I could avoid unnecessary trouble.”

“I-I see....so this kind of task is also easy for Hiiro.”

Eveam seems to have been nodding a lot of times in consent.

“I-if that’s the case, do you have evidence to prove your words?”

“So that wasn’t enough make you believe, huh?”

Liliyn makes a grumpy face in pursuit to Marione’s words.

“Hmph, if that’s the case why don’t we ask mister 『Rank 1』-sama to check if Cruzer isn’t lying? Surely this kind of authentication won’t be quite the labor with that distinguished eyes of yours, no?”

At urgency of Marione's word, not only him but Eveam also glanced at him. Aquinas quietly closed his eyes and opened his mouth.

".....it's the truth."

Such simple words was enough proof. The two had grasped that Aquinas' 《Devil Eyes》perceived the truth without any lies. And since he said it wasn't a lie, it also proves that what Cruzer had said were the truth.

"B-but why were you living in such a place? Ah, let me take that back, rather, why did you come out now out of the many years of your seclusion?"

"I don't think those matters has nothing to do with the current agenda of this conference, right? What we are here to discuss now is that 《Cursed Sword》, and the countermeasures regarding it."

In face of Marione's curious doubts, Liliyn quickly struck down that question as if it was natural. Since she had a point, Marione did not refute and remained silent.

"T-that's right. It's as Liliyn-dono says. I apologize for doubting you Cruzer-dono, if you are one of Hiyo's companion then there is no problem. I will keep my promise and will not say anything whether where you are from, your birthplace or even your personal career. For someone admitted by Hiyo, you have my word."

In face of the words of Eveam, Cruzer opened his eyes in surprise and smiled gently.

"I'm grateful for your kind words. To think that boy's influence would reach even here, that boy is really quite an unexpected one."

Apart from the fact that Cruzer was won over by the Demon Lord's redeeming words, Liliyn seemed to have also noticed another meaning behind Eveam's words.

"Then, back to the heart of the matter, please tell us what you know."

"Understood."

Chapter 263 - The Creation of Sacrifice

10 years ago, when Cruzer Jio got wind of a rumour regarding the location of a weapon he had once created, he headed towards there to retrieve it back. His reasons for doing this was simple, he wanted to collect all of the existing weaponries he had made and keep it away from the rest of this world.

Because of the weapons he had created, people gained power and at the same time, lost their precious families due to the very same reason, the power of his weapons. So in order to prevent such tragedies again, he recovered all of his existing creations even if he had to get it from them by force.

The place he was headed was called the 【Doa Ruins】. It was once a community where a certain existing race had lived in here.

Although several years had passed and most traces of its habitation were hardly visible, Cruzer walked along the rocky walls that could collapse anytime and searched through the withered buildings.

Then, he perceived something. It had a faint signs of life and also had a repulsive feeling. And more than anything, he could feel the presence of his creation.

While following his senses, he was led to a big stone statue. And surprisingly, he found a staircase leading to the underground as if it were concealed under the stone statue.

Of course, Cruzer felt the presence of his creation more strongly under him. However, shortly after taking his first step, the repulsive feeling made him hesitate in proceeding further.

It was due to a strong.....thirst for blood.

And following that was the unpleasant stench of rotten flesh stimulating his senses. Honestly speaking, he wanted to leave this place as soon as possible, but since he had come this far, he thought of finishing what he had gone here in the first place.

The inside was constructed from dirt soil as he could see many ant nest in

various directions. An average person would have gotten lost due to the complexity of the area.

However, Cruzer advanced without a hint of hesitation, this was all due to his mastery in scouting. The signs of his creation gradually got stronger and when he approached a certain passage hole, an intense pressure ran through him.

It was as if a knife had struck him from behind, a sense that wanted to take his life out of him, but the feeling soon calmed down at once.

He noticed that he was sweating a lot more compared to the usual. He wasn't only directed with hostility and murderous intent, but it was an intense mix of various emotions.

But fortunately, he couldn't feel it any longer. Silence had greeted him as he pondered what in the world was that feeling.

While gulping in nervousness, Cruzer entered the hole, making precautions to that strange feeling that could attack him once again. Surprisingly, the place he had entered contained several objects shaped like a coffin.

Cruzer unintentionally frowned. Because the blood thirst and the foul smell strengthened further upon his arrival. The place seemed to be a square building with a considerably vast space. And filling that place were innumerable coffins in every nook and corner of it.

The coffins were lined unnaturally forming a circle, and there were odd coffins placed at the center of this strange scene.

(Is there some sort of significance with these...)

In the center of the room, there is a space for people to walk extending straight towards the end of the room. And at the end was a statue he had seen before but many times larger was embedded on the wall.

The statue had an appearance of an ugly looking beast, but it strangely also possess a human-like face. It was so creepy that just by looking at it gives shivers onto his spine. While he was briefly looking at, Cruzer's eyes opened wide.

Because at the huge statue's forehead was a nostalgic sword stabbed on it.

He was definitely sure that was one of his many creations.

He didn't understand why it was in such a place, but he felt relieved for being able to find it.

On the way towards his destination however, he heard something collapse and shifted his gaze to its origin in panic. He found out then that an accident had occurred on one of the coffins at center of the room.

Cruzer concluded that it had probably collapsed due to the weak vibration of his steps. When he look through the casket, what he saw surprised him.

It was some mummy. It was pitch black, carbonised, and just by looking at it gives him a rather unpleasant feeling.

Moreover, it was impossible to tell what kind of inhabitants they were based on their mummified form. But Cruzer had little knowledge regarding the ruins.

(....so this is the 『Cupidos Tribe』....)

TL Note: クピドゥス族 | Kupidusu Zoku. Read it as Cupidos Tribe

It was a mysterious race that, as one could see, had been extinct for several years. They had hardly showed up in history books and Cruzer who had lived a long life didn't meet or either see them in general.

Although Cruzer he knew the name of race that built the entirety of the 【Doa Ruins】 , as to why they did these kind of things as well as the mummification, he doesn't have a clue.

(Hm? This is...)

Suddenly he noticed a bundle of paper placed at the head of the mummy. Although it had faded enough to prove its old age, it seems that its content hadn't entirely withered.

Because he was intrigued, Cruzer picked up the bundle of papers in his hands. He treated it with care so that it won't tear out of age. There he saw the name of the God they worshipped, and the first sword that the God had built for them.

“....《Cursed Sword》.....?”

It was hard to read, but that was actually what it states. And the name of that 『Cursed Sword』 was....

“....『Sacrifice』....”

Because he was scanning over it out of curiosity, he had said its name, which seemed to have been a mistake. At the next moment, the repulsive feeling assailed his senses once again. It was as if his power was being absorbed by something.

“Darn, a blunder....what’s happening!?”

Suddenly, the mouth of the statue embedded on the far end of the wall opened, and then numerous tentacles came out from it.

“Wha!?”

He immediately jumped back in retreat. But for some reason the tentacles were heading towards coffins. When he thought the tentacles stabbed the coffins, something was being sucked out from the inside and then the coffins turned to ashes.

Immediately, after turning one of the coffins into ashes, it proceeded to another, stabbing one coffin after another. And then, it finally attacked Cruzer. Thinking it was bad to stay at one place, he retreated at a far distance, which caused the tentacles to be bewildered as if they were confused how their target vanished.

(That’s strange...)

Looking at his feet, he saw that the ground wasn’t glowing. Apparently, the area covered by a strange light seemed to be range where the tentacles could only act within.

(But what is with this strange light..?)

While being dumbfounded by such spectacle, he noticed that the tentacles slipped towards the forehead of the large statue where his creation was stabbed and wrapped that sword with its body.

“What is it doing?”

To understand what was happening, he once again looked over the bundle of

paper. And there, he saw something surprising. Cruzer immediately kicked the ground while placing his hand on the sheathed katana on his waist, and in a blink of an eye, he reached the large stone statue upfront.

Then, he severed the tentacles coming out of the mouth with his sword. A disgusting green liquid spurted out from the cut part.

The cocoon being supported by the tentacles falls to the ground. However, the tentacles wrapping around the sword were being sucked in as if it was being absorbed. Or more like, rather than being absorbed, the tentacles were covering the sword and changing its former shape. It seemed the strange light was also gone along with it.

“How in the world!?”

Apart from the shock of his creation turning into a different shape, he was surprised by the eerie eyeball that had appeared at the base of the sword. And then,

“Gegiygiygiygiyaaaaaa!”

Cruzer couldn’t comprehend what was happening anymore. A suddenly shrilling laughter came out from the sword, and then the eyeball moved with *gyoro sound towards Cruzer’s direction.

“Hohou, so you are the next one who will uphold me....rather skinny if you ask me...but whatever...”

An unpleasant laughter that sounded as if someone was scratching a glass pane and a talking voice deep enough to instill fear were directed to Cruzer.

“Now, tell me your desire. What do you 『want』 to destroy?”

This sword...no, he realized that this object shouldn’t be made known to the world. Since Cruzer thought so, his actions were immediate.

He took out a sheathed knife and unties it from its sheath, then after taking it out, he slashed it towards the empty space. A rift opened from that place, the talking sword who noticed this found it strange and spoke ‘Hah?’

Cruzer placed the knife back on his bosom and stretched out his hands to the rift that had opened. Then, he felt his hands sunk into something as if it was

buried in deep sand.

"Oi, what the heck are you doing?"

Without answering the question of the talking sword, Cruzer focused in moving his hands submerged in that rift.

"...found it"

Cruzer slowly pulled out his hands. And what he was holding was a jet-black sheath. Numerous chains were exaggeratedly tied around it as an incredible pressure was coming out from it. The moment he took this thing, the rift in the space restored naturally.

"What is that?"

Cruzer had a stiff expression as he approached the talking sword who voiced out such concern.

".....I'm really sorry, my child. I never thought it would turn out this way."

When Cruzer expressed a bitter expression, he dropped the sheath towards the talking sword.

"You bastard! W-what are you doing!?"

Upon touching the sheath, a dazzling light engulfed the sword and then....

..... a sword inside a black sheath had fallen onto the ground.

The handle and sword were sturdily strapped by the chains to prevent its release.

After that, Cruzer picked up the sheathed sword, and went to the Belial Sea nearby. He came here because he had heard that this ocean was considered dangerous that no one had dared approached.

Although Cruzer dived into the ocean, he couldn't go deeper due to strong current it possesses. However, he had judged that this deepness was enough for him to safely return back, and quietly let go of the sword to the invisible sea below.

Slowly, he gazed at the sword sinking towards the bottom of the ocean and then left that spot.

Honestly speaking, he wanted to actually destroy the sword, but the notion of him carelessly doing something on it, he deemed it dangerous and stopped such intentions.

And besides, there's a terrible monster at the bottom of this sea, so even if the whereabouts of the sword was ascertained, it would still be impossible to retrieve.

(With this it's over.... That thing isn't something the world must know)

He was sad that his creation had turned into such an existence, but he also thought that his measures regarding it was good enough as way of cleaning up his mess.

(If possible, I want you to remain in this sea forever)

Cruzer who had resurfaced to the land, held up both of his hands and prayed quietly with such thoughts.

Chapter 264 - Cupidos Tribe

Upon hearing Cruzer's side story, Liliyn asked first about the details regarding the 《Cursed Sword - Sacrifice》

"Please look at this."

In response to Liliyn's question, Cruzer pulled out a book from his bag that was on the floor. Everyone frowned when they saw him put the book on the desk.

"What is that thing...?"

Naturally, Liliyn inquired about it.

"This is an ancient document talking about 《Sacrifice》 that I found at 【Doa Ruins】"

"Old documents? This?....let me see it."

"Sure. But please treat it with care."

When the book was received, Liliyn turns over the cover. Upon reading it, one could hear 'I see' in small mutters. It certainly looked like a book on the surface, but when you look at its content, it was just an old file that was carefully pasted one by one on another set of papers.

He probably had a fear that it would wither completely if he haven't done this kind of process. And thus, Cruzer filed it and kept it like that.

But upon reaching the first page, Liliyn's face distorted into a question mark-kind of expression.

"....I can't read it."

The characters written couldn't be deciphered at all. Of course, it's possible to draw some conclusions based on the pictures in some parts of it, but she couldn't even understand that part too without the contents comprehension.

"Liliyn-dono, would you please show it to me as well."

When Eveam came towards Liliyn, both Marione and Aquinas followed

behind.

“....this is....”

Eveam narrowed her eyes as she looked it, but as expected even she didn't understand most of it as she would stare and try to decipher the foreign characters in it.

“It's no surprise that anyone couldn't read this. The character used in here is not the present 『Ranaris Alphabet』 commonly used in 【Edea】，but the 『Ancient Yueguwan Alphabet』. This alphabet was used in the ancient times that was lost in transition towards this present time.” (Cruzer)

TL Note:

ラナリス文字 | Ranarisu Monji. Thus, Ranaris Alphabet

古代ユエグワン文字 | Kodai Yueguwan Monji. Thus, Ancient Yueguwan Alphabet.

Thereupon, Aquinas gently took the book from Eveam, and quietly stared at it with his pair of red eyes,

“....this is certainly the 『Ancient Yueguwan Alphabet』”

“You can read it?”

Cruzer couldn't hide his surprise and promptly asked if he could decipher it. The others also sent glance to Aquinas waiting for his answer.

“Yes, but just a little bit.”

“Fumu, well that guy had live a long life after all. No surprises there.”

Although Liliyn commented with a mix of disgust,

“Nofofofofo! But if we are talking about long life, isn't Milady the same?”

“S-shut it! If you say it like that you make me sound as if I'm incapable of learning about it!”

If Aquinas knew about it, but she doesn't, then their difference is that one had learned of such knowledge. In other words, she doesn't want to be compared to Aquinas with such a loss, and thus her panicked state.

"For the time being, does that mean this document contains information about 『Sacrifice』 who was the main cause of [Shanjuumon Cave]'s collapse?"

When Eveam inquired back and asked him, Cruzer responded with a hand on his chins.

"Yes. When I first read it at the ruins, I was deeply frightened....no, it's more better to say I was terrified by what I saw."

"You were terrified?"

"Yes. First of all, let me tell you the ability of 『Cursed Sword - Sacrifice』 that everyone would likely want to know first."

He received the book from Aquinas and placed it at the desk so that everyone could see while he was explaining. He turned the pages a few times over then stopped at a certain place. A picture of an ominous sword was drawn at it.

It wasn't an ordinary sword, it felt like the flames of hell was frozen in time and made into a sword. And at base of it was an eyeball that was supplemented by Cruzer's explanation.

"『Cursed Sword - Sacrifice』 has the ability to destroy everything in exchange for the life force of the wielder."

"Compensated by the wielder's life force you say?"

Liliyn responded with a suspicious tone.

"Yes, vitality that we put in it is not the physical strength we all generally know of, but literally the life force of the wielder."

"...in other words, you're having your life cut short?"

"There's no mistake in that understanding."

"So there was a savage sword that existed like that....."

It was then Eveam who said those words in wonder, and,

"I apologize for interrupting Cruzer-dono, when you say it could destroy everything, it sounded vague and I couldn't get a good grasp on it...."

"Is that so. In simpler words, in proportion to the life force you give to 『Sacrifice』, it could destroy anything from this world, even if it's the illusions

created by the power of the 《Founder Demon Lord》”

“Preposterous! Those kind of things are impossible!”

It was Marione who responded next with a shout.

“Only the likes of the Founder Demon Lord is capable of seeing through the illusion magic surrounding the 《Core》! Even I and Aquinas couldn’t get past it! That’s how exceptional the power of the Founder Demon Lord is! It isn’t something a mere sword could possibly break with one attack! M-moreover, why would that so called 『Cupidos Tribe』 have to make a wretched sword like that huh?!”

With those words alone, Cruzer was able to evaluate Marione as a person with a high value of pride in him. Perhaps, the founder Demon Lord was really a non-standard existence.

“Although what I said sounded impossible, but it’s the truth. And besides, do you know the relationship between the Founder Demon Lord and the 『Cupidos Tribe』?”

With his silence, it was proof that he didn’t know anything about it, Eveam who doesn’t seem to understand it, looked at Marione then Aquinas with curious eyes.

“From the looks of it, it appears that Demon Lord-sama doesn’t know as well. Can I continue my talk then?”

Cruzer glances to Aquinas to seek his approval. However, Aquinas shook his head and said,

“About that, let me speak about their connection”

Apparently, it seems Aquinas would tell the details himself. Everyone shifted their attention to him as he started to talk.

“A long time ago, the Founder Demon Lord who was also known as Adams, stumbled on a problem regarding a certain race. And that race was the 『Cupidos Tribe』. They were a minority race, and were racially unrelated with other races. They were quiet and obedient”

“Then what’s the problem with them? Although they were racially unrelated,

they don't seem to be picking a fight with other races, I don't see the problem regarding their behavior either?"

Aquinas closed his eyes when Eveam asked so,

"Yes, that's how everyone thought about them. However, Adams noticed a strange sense of incongruity in their existence."

"A sense of incongruity?"

"It was something one could overlook as they thought of them as a friendly race."

"....then what in the world was it....?"

"It's the look they give when they see another race.....Adams who saw such eyes felt a faint flicker of light in them. It's as if a hawk was looking down at them from the top, just like an eyes of a predator."

"D-does that mean..."

"None of the races noticed such eyes from them. But Adams felt the incompatibility of it. So she ordered the 《Val Kiria Series》whom I had told that Adams created by herself, to investigate them. Then, the shocking truth came to light."

Eveam gulps in anticipation.

"Based on the investigation..... A lot our brethren were killed by their hands."

"Wha!?"

"Adams who knew of it decided to seriously investigate their movements and deemed that they were a dangerous race. And the results that we have found were their race characteristics.....and atrocious ideology"

"Characteristics? Ideology?"

"A race characteristic in which they willingly eat human-flesh by nature."

The impact of those words were unexpected to Eveam as she carried a hand to her mouth with a pale complexion.

"Moreover, they can incorporate the characteristic of the race they eat. So they devoured most of the strong 『Evila』s and improved their own existence"

“That’s too gruesome....even though they are an 『Evila』 as well....”

“You are probably wondering why they are doing such a things..... Of course, they also wish to eat the ordinary foods the other 『Evila』 eats. So for the sake of surviving, they didn’t eat their kins. However, their actions were deeply rooted to their warped ideology.”

“Right! Their ideology! What in the world were their ideology?”

Eveam inquired with a slightly agitated expression.

“Their ideology was.....the revival of their God”

Chapter 265 - Warped Ideology

Liliyn had heard the ideology of this『Cupidos Tribe』. Needless to say, she hardly knew of their existence at all.

However, to hear such warped ideology, it was a first for her.

“What? God? Hey, who is this you speak of?”

Liliyn questioned Aquinas after he had explained so far.

“I’m sure everyone must have heard of this name.....《Devil - Netsaffa》”

TL Note: 魔神・ネツアツファ | Majin - Netsaffa. No idea on this one. Thus, I read it as Netsaffa as it is.

At mention of that word, everyone’s expression stiffened.

“T-then are you saying that this『Cupidos Tribe』is trying to revive their God who isn’t really a God but the Devil?”

Aquinas gave his assent to Liliyn’s question.

“Cruzer had mentioned this in his story a while ago right? That what’s written in here were about《Sacrifice》and the God they worship.”

Although it was true that Cruzer had spoke of it in his reminiscence of the past, Liliyn couldn’t entirely accept the matter at hand.

In the past, there were few symbolic idols that were revered as one’s God, and a minority of these races follows such culture, so it wasn’t a surprise to have this topic brought up.

But for this race to idolise not a God, but the Devil who had once manifested in this world, then this talk is an entirely different matter.

“It is definitely true that the name《Devil - Netsaffa》is written here in《Ancient Yueguwan Alphabet》”

Liliyn looked at Cruzer’s face to ascertain his words, but the latter immediately replied with a serious nod to her.

“《Devil - Netsaffa》was an existence that tried to destroy【Edea】a long time

ago. The Founder Demon Lord Adams didn't want the 『Cupidos Tribe』 to revive such an existence. That's why Adams.....decided to bury them all from the history”

“....they weren't able to solicit them?”

Eveam asked with an anxious expression, but Aquinas shook his head sideways in response.

“.....there was madness reflected in their eyes. And I heard that they said something to Adams when they confronted her. That only the 《Devil》 could save and lead them.”

“....I see”

“They didn't listen at all to any of her advice. But if they were left alone, disasters would strike this world sooner or later. Therefore, Adams made a decision. To destroy such race with her own two hands.”

“Certainly, even if you say that such a race have a special ability, it doesn't matter when in front of the Founder Demon Lord. It's not an exaggeration to say that your life would end that moment you see her figure.”

Although Marione was admiring the said person while his arms were folded, Liliyn lightly clicked her tongue. It was only Silva and Aquinas who noticed the clicking tongue of the ill-humored Liliyn.

Liliyn was unhappy because she was reminded again that the blood of the Founder Demon Lord was flowing in her veins. It's as if she wasn't fond of being compared to her own ancestor.

That said, what Marione thoughtlessly said wasn't entirely false.

(It is true though that a minority race with such an unusual ability isn't enough to be an opponent for the Founder Demon Lord)

Adams power was too deviant to the point that Liliyn couldn't help but admit it. To the extent that the phrase 'being a match for thousands' pales in comparison to her.

And with that, the story regarding the connection of the Founder Demon Lord and 『Cupidos Tribe』 finally ended as everyone unconsciously leaked a sigh.

"Now then, let us return back to the topic at hand after knowing their connections."

It was Cruzer who started the ball rolling again.

"Now why did the 『Cupidos Tribe』 created 『Sacrifice』, that's because it was a necessary component in reviving the 『Devil』"

"A necessity?"

When Marione asked back, Cruzer placed a hand on his chin.

"Yes. In this article, it was said that 『Sacrifice』 was created from the 『Devil』 since originally 『Sacrifice』 was a part of the 『Devil』"

"Impossible..."

"It was for this very reason why they built an imitation of 『Sacrifice』, so that they can use it as an intermediary in reviving the 『Devil』"

"So that's how it was.....the 『Cupidos Tribe』 was trying to recreate 『Sacrifice』 at 【Doa Ruins】"

Marione makes a few nods in consent to his words.

"But as a result, the whole race was destroyed by the Founder Demon Lord and were unable to continue the ceremony."

"If that's the case, what were those mummies then, Cruzer-dono?"

It was Eveam next who asked him a question.

".....to recreate 『Sacrifice』 various requirements were needed. The first one were numerous sacrificial bodies."

"....."

"Perhaps they were prepared to carry their fellow brethren killed by the Founder Demon Lord to the ruins. But there were also other 『Evila』 races among the mummies inside the coffins."

"Does that mean..."

"Yes, it was probably the offered sacrifice for recreating 『Sacrifice』. Although it seemed that living flesh was the original custom, they have gathered instead

many dead bodies in accordance to it.”

Eveam covered her mouth with her hands as she made a disgusted expression.

“However, before they could perform the ritual, they were annihilated by the Founder Demon Lord. Thus, the ceremony was halted, and the corpse collected at the ruins were mummified. Originally, the bodies collected would rot and turn into bones, but apparently, it was written in here that the coffins has the power to prevent the bodies inside it from disintegrating, so they mummified it and placed it in the coffin.”

Cruzer then points a certain part from the book.

“But why was the halted ritual suddenly had been restored and gave birth to《Sacrifice》?”

The question of Eveam was a natural follow up. However, when Cruzer heard those words, he made an apologetic look while hanging his head down.

“....because of my arrival there.”

“....what do you mean?”

“First, one of the conditions of recreating 《Sacrifice》 was the many sacrificial bodies, and the mummies in those coffins were enough to fulfill this requirement.”

Everyone returned a nod of consent to his words.

“Next, in order to recreate 《Sacrifice》 , you need a vessel to contain it.”

“A vessel....?....does that mean one of Cruzer-dono’s....sword?”

“Exactly, Demon Lord-sama.”

“I see. It is indeed true that Cruzer Jio’s creations could serve as a perfect vessel for it.”

Aquinas gave praise to Cruzer’s talent but the latter looked sullen. Although he was happy for being praised for his talent, but because of the very same reason, his talent that had brought great complications, he made a rather troubled expression.

“The sword used was made from a long time ago, but the materials were of high quality and it was comparable to my other children.”

“Well, since the weapons Cruzer-dono had made were scattered throughout the world, it wouldn’t be surprising that it would fall into the hands of the 『Cupidos Tribe』”

At the mention of Silva’s word, not only Liliyn, but everyone nodded in consent as well.

“I understand that the sword you made was used as its vessel. But what completed the ritual of recreating 『Sacrifice』?”

Following after Silva, Liliyn immediately asked her question.

“The next step was easy. Since the ritual had been almost complete.”

“Had you completed it?”

“Yes, the next requirement was a person capable of using spirit language and possesses strong magical powers”

“You what?”

“I only noticed this afterwards. But that room itself was playing the role of a big magical formation.”

It was difficult to notice if one didn’t see it in a bird’s eye view, but the coffins were arranged in the manner of forming a magic formation and Cruzer who was standing at the center of that formation had unconsciously completed the setup. The feeling of weakness he felt at that time was due to his magical power being snatched away from him due to that particular magic formation.

And as Cruzer had done. The eerie and repulsive feeling that he felt when he entered the shrine was the consciousness of the 『Kupidos Tribe』 that had led him into saying the name of 『Sacrifice』.

After the mentioning the trigger word to start the ritual, it perceived the trespassers magic power required which Cruzer initially had and consequently resulted in the successful recreation of 『Sacrifice』.

“Perhaps a strong deep-seated grudge was swirling in that room. Remembering my actions back then, it seems my ability to think had been

manipulated by something. Maybe that strong grudge had instilled their desires into my intentions back then and led me to finish the actions they weren't able to when they died."

Cruzer sighed with a bitter expression.

"If I did not know anything... I could have made an excuse and treated it as an accident, but my sword was used there and because I went over there, 『Sacrifice』 was born"

While everyone was hesitating what to say to him,

"Stop cowering like a fool, it's disappointing."

Liliyn glared at him with those red ruby eyes of her while pouting her mouth.

"Liliyn...san?"

"Where's the prodigy in the past that I know! I thought you have decided you wouldn't run away anymore! If that's the case, then confront the issue with confidence! Or are you going back to hiding in regret again!"

Liliyn pointed her fingers to him in plain sight as she declared such words. The rest of the people except for Silva who was smiling, were at a loss for words.

After little while, the cheeks of Cruzer who was taken aback, relaxed.

"I really can't beat Liliyn-san after all. Don't worry. I had enough of that warning from Hiiro-san. I won't run away any longer. That's why I'm sharing my knowledge regarding this to everyone."

"Hmph, then there's no problem."

"Nofofo, isn't that relieving Milady."

In face of such people, Aquinas seemed to smile a bit, but nobody noticed that smile of his.

And then immediately, he made a serious expression and began to speak.

"Then let us make use of that knowledge. Cruzer Jio, are you sure that the Predecessor Demon Lord has that 『Sacrifice』?"

"Yes, I have confirmed it with my own two eyes. I do not know how he got it from 【Belial Sea】, but since it was originally my creation, I'm definitely sure he

had it."

"I see, although this is hard to believe, but are you saying that he used the power of 《Sacrifice》 to obtain the hidden treasure in 【Shanjuumon Cave】 which is the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》?"

"Yes, perhaps, in exchange for a portion of the Predecessor Demon Lord's life, he used 《Sacrifice》 to 'destroy' the illusions protecting the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》"

"To think a 《Cursed Sword》 could do such a thing.... Then that means, the Predecessor Demon Lord possesses 《Sacrifice》 which is a part of 《Devil - Netsaffa》. This had turned out into the worst possible outcome...."

The words of Aquinas swayed the head of Eveam and Marione arbitrarily. They seem to realize as well how alarming the problem was.

It was already a serious matter that Avoros had declared war on the world through the demonstration of his power, and now he had obtained a part of the 《Devil》 who was trying to lead the world into ruins. It was something they cannot overlook anymore.

And the effect has already been proven. It was the very fact that he was able to obtain the 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》 which no one was able to. Moreover, it was all due to a single attack from a frightening sword he possessed.

While the executives of the Evila's side were anxious about the future to come,

"I have a question..."

Liliyn spoke a short question of hers.

"The 《Core of the Founder Demon Lord》.....why was it kept in such a place?"

Chapter 266 - The Two Grave Posts

To begin with, Liliyn was confused by a certain doubt of hers. Why does the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 still continue to exist in this world? And also, of all places, why was it hidden inside the 【Shanjuumon Cave】?

Adams, the Founder Demon Lord, once known for her almighty power, realised her time was almost up and entrusted the country to someone she deemed trustworthy and went on a wandering trip. According to her, she wanted to find a place suitable for her death.

Of course, everyone opposed this. She who always does the impossible, a dauntless and bold woman and yet possesses the astounding beauty that could garner everyone's attention. Such a woman was the founder of 【Xaous】 and the one who led the whole race of Evila.

There were many people who wanted to fulfil their lives in this country until their last breath. Yes, many were grateful to her for establishing such a nation.

However, most of the people knew she wouldn't yield in opposition to what she had decided already. Their persuasion was meaningless at all. And in front of her people, she smiled back and left the country like a wind.

There was a woman named Sharuu who had looking at such scene. She was the woman whom Adams had entrusted the country and the genuine daughter of Adams.

Sharuu Li Reysis Red Rose.

And her daughter she had given birth to in this world was Liliyn Li Reysis Red Rose.

From her mother Sharuu, she was told what kind of person was Adams. And that her magic was the same as Adams.

No one has the same unique magic in this world. In other words, somewhere along Adams travel she had entered death's door. Liliyn also recognized this fact.

However, the fact that the 《Core》 which was said to be Adams second heart, was kept inside 【Shanjuumon Cave】 , a location within the vicinity of 【Xaous】. In other words, there was a high possibility that at least someone had witnessed Adams death.

And now, while talking with Cruzer as the main focus, she was concerned why the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 was kept there and so tried to verify the truth through Demon Lord Eveam.

“To be honest....I’m also not well-informed about this matter.”

Eveam made an apologetic look as she cast her eyes downward.

“You don’t know? Even though you inherited the title of the Demon Lord?”

“What I was informed about was that the 《Core of the Founding Demon Lord》 was kept inside 【Shanjuumon Cave】. And that it was an unattainable treasure that no one had ever achieved in their lifetime.... how about Marione?”

“Mu? You’re asking what I know about this matter? Let’s see, I know that only me and Aquinas from the 《Cruel》 knows that the 《Core》 is hidden over there. And the one who taught me of this information was your mother, Vincent-sama, Your Majesty.”

“My dear mother? I see...”

It seems she was surprised a little at the unexpected words of Marione.

“However, I was not told whom kept in such a place and for what purpose.”

At the moment Liliyn thought she wouldn’t find any more information from them,

“If it’s only the people inside this room, maybe it is fine to tell you about it.”

Suddenly Aquinas opened his mouth, but everyone was so shocked by the meaning of his words.

“A-Aquinas...knows the reason?”

He nods at the small question of Eveam.

“As a matter of fact, yes.”

As a matter of fact...? Liliyn stared at him with a suspicious look. And she was speechless at the following words he said.

"Because the one who kept the 《Core》 in that place.....was none other than me."

Silence wrapped the whole room as if time had frozen. Only someone's breathing entered the ears of Liliyn. She had to say something, but her mind was a jumbled mess right now.

Of course it would be. Because her elder brother had said something unbelievable....

"H-how did this happen?"

It was Eveam who broke the silence. Her formal tone had also changed due to her surprise.

"T-that's right Aquinas! Why haven't you spoken such things to me! What is the meaning of this!"

Marione breaks off with an angry voice towards Aquinas. He might be angry for hiding such facts not only to his comrades but to the Demon Lord as well.

"That's because....it was her wish."

"Her....wish?"

At last, Liliyn was able to squeeze out her voice. Aquinas gazed at Liliyn's eyes which the latter noticed a small light at back of his eyes.

"Yes. You might not know of this but 【Shanjuumon Cave】 was a former mountain before."

"It was mountain? Really?"

Aquinas gave his agreement to Eveam who was inclining her neck in wonder.

"Yes. It was formerly known as the 【Shanjuumon Mountain】"

"In other words, 【Shanjuumon Cave】 was the remains of this mountain?"

"Yes, and there was a certain creature in that mountain."

"A living creature..?"

"That creature was Adams' first friend.... And also the life she had killed with her own two hands."

Everyone hardened in their places. But no one responded and Aquinas continued.

"It seems unexpected, but his friend's magic went out of control, so Adams had to use her magic to stop her friend."

"When you say magic you mean her 《Fantasy Magic》?"

At mention of those words, Aquinas nodded a bit and expressed his affirmation.

"Yes, however, Adams was helpless against her friend's berserk state. Her friend lost its temper and roared as if it feared her. And the rampage seemed to have destroyed the mountain."

So the mountain was lost and its remains were formed into a cave. All due to the monster living in that place.

"No matter what she said, her friend didn't stop. However, their struggle did not last long. Because of the power of her magic, it had burdened not only the spirit of her friend but also physically.....and eventually lost her life."

"That's too sad...."

It was understandable that Eveam would mutter such words. Unintentionally killing a friend you have just met with your own power, it's natural to feel that way.

The others also frowned in response as they expressed their own takes on this story.

"After that, she suffered a lot. There was nothing she could do. It seems the creature hadn't told her much of itself or even his homage that it hardly knows. But Adams had fun playing with it as her friend. That's why she blamed herself for killing her friend. And decide to dedicate a grave post to her most important friend."

"A grave post...."

Eveam muttered such small words as she grimaced unpleasantly.

"For this reason, since she was aware her time is almost up, she wished to die in the same place as her friend. But before that, she decided to tour the world towards the places her friend wanted to see someday."

Adams burdened herself of inheriting her friend's dream so that she could at least make up from what she did to her friend.

"It was really a coincidence that I met her there. That day was the time I was guarding the borders. I suddenly wanted to see the ocean and acted on such desire. Then I found Adams.....collapsed on the foreshore of the beach."

At first Aquinas didn't recognize it was Adams. It seems that her appearance wasn't that youthful anymore and her body felt lifeless as if her power was cut out from her.

The beautiful crimson hair she possessed was steadily fading in time. However, Aquinas' appearance was a miracle for her.

She requested Aquinas to be taken to a certain place. Of course, Aquinas thought it was better to treat her immediately, but his 『Demon Eyes』 told him that it was too late for her. Still there are many people who will be pleased if she returned to the country.

Adams stubbornly refused even though he said so. She persistently wished to be taken to a place called 【Shanjuumon Cave】. It was her final selfish wish....she said.

Aquinas also had an obligation to her. She was even the one who trained him in combat skills.

That's why Aquinas respected such a woman everyone acknowledged. And made his decision. To fulfill what this woman hoped for.

Then the two who came to 【Shanjuumon Cave】 were talking a while at the recesses of the cave. Then, he heard Adam's story about her friend.

He did not know how much time passed after that. Just that Aquinas listened to her story quietly. No, she seemed to be telling such stories to someone not present rather than to Aquinas who was there with her..

It was quite obvious if you asked whom she toured the world for. Aquinas

quietly watched the woman who moved her mouth with a hollow expression.

Then, she coughed in pain. And light seemed to have returned to her eyes. Her consciousness returned.

At that time, she requested something from Aquinas.

『I want you to make my grave post in here』

When he heard that she had important attachments to this place, Aquinas couldn't deny her request. And even said, she would definitely protect this place, with a calm and happy expression.

Then, she quietly closed her eyes that had never opened again. While engrossed at the moment of her death, her lifeless body was suddenly wrapped in pale light and floated in the air.

Aquinas was confused to what that blinding light was. And then the light disappeared and Aquinas who saw such a scene was at a loss for words.

An intimate number of light blue balls was spread out before him. He realized later that this was the power of her 《Core》

And why did such a thing happened....

“She just wanted to protect that place, so that no one could come closer to it. And she entrusted the last of her magic to the 《Core》 so that no one could take it”

So that it could protect the two sleeping grave posts forever.....